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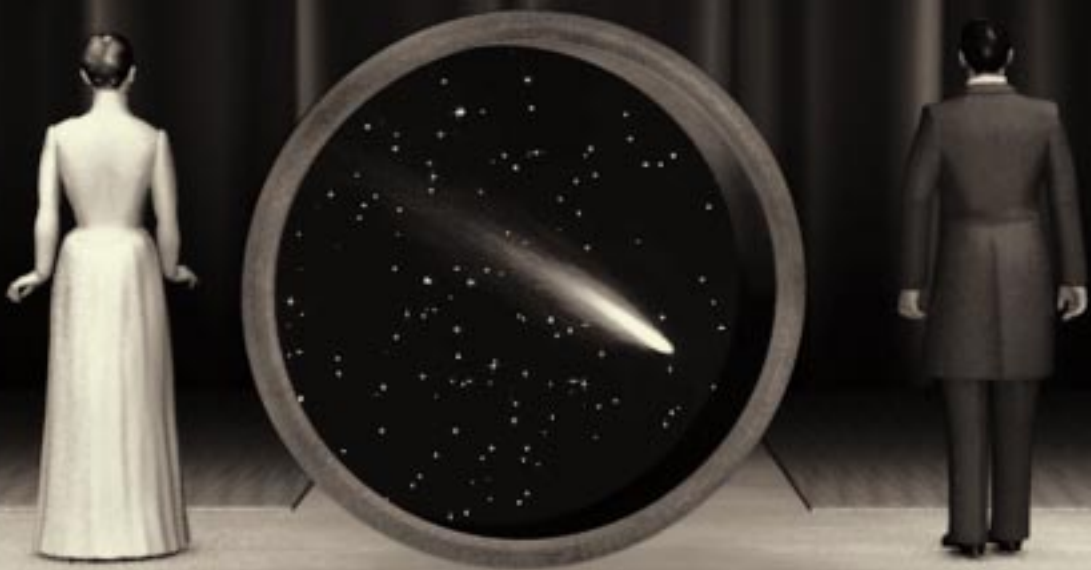
Vol. 3 Issue 2

MAGAZINE

• May 1998

VISUAL EFFECTS & EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION

***Monsters of Grace:*
High Art Meets High Tech**



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New York's Indy Scene

Animating Under the Camera

Plus: MIP, Stuttgart and Zagreb

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Cover: Kleiser-Walczak Construction Company (KWCC) created stereoscopic 3-D computer animation for Philip Glass' and Robert Wilson's new multimedia performance, *Monsters of Grace*, featured in this issue's "Dig This!" This specially-rendered image is courtesy of IPA.



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Heather Kenyon

Varying degrees of separation: visual effects and experimental animation.

So once again another month goes by and it looks as if we are putting two very different areas or types of animation together. However, this month proved to be another interesting month as we explored from visual effects to experimental animation. One thing that we clearly found was that both visual effects supervisors and experimental animation directors begin their process only knowing the end result that they wish to achieve. Whether it is an incredible cutting

edge visual effect or a new animated visual, emotional experience, the artist understands the final impact they wish to depart to the audience but they are never quite sure, in the beginning, just how to create the phenomenon. However, through tests, trial and error, spontaneity, "Mickey Mousing" and experimentation, they end up creating what they had intended. Whether it is Bärbel Neubauer using homemade



uncharted waters.

One way we, at *Animation World Magazine*, would like to see visual effects and experimental animation come together more often however, is in creative and storytelling ways. It would be great to see artists working with computer generated

imagery delving more into the world of experimental animation. We would like to see the stories that this new technology could unleash in less traditional forums. As John R. Dilworth pointed out after being a member of the preselection committee at Zagreb, many student films using computer animation are still tests of technology, rather computer aided storytelling. As our cover shows...the merging of these two worlds offers an entire new realm of possibilities.

And exactly what is that image on the cover? Find out in a new monthly section called, Dig This! Every month we will feature the coolest *thing* that comes into our office. Be it a toy, a person, an idea, a new invention, an interesting animation technique...Whatever comes through our door and rises to the top. With this new feature we will be able to shine a monthly spotlight on something new, fresh and interesting.

Until Next Time,
Heather

r u b b e r stamps, or Digital Domain's newest proprietary software, successful, innovative artists have a way of fashioning what works. Two completely separate arenas, using different techniques and tools toward very different means, still have the same creative process and determination toward the end result, while plying

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Dig This! *Monsters of Grace* : High Tech Meets High Art

by Wendy Jackson

Here at *Animation World Magazine*, during our daily contact with the world animation community, we see countless videos, books, games, toys, tools and products as well as films, performances and themed events employing animation. Every so often, among the volumes of material we see, something or someone that truly stands out as innovative or remarkable. With this new monthly feature, "Dig This!," *Animation World Magazine's* editors will filter the volumes of material to profile for our readers what we think is the latest and greatest "new thing" related to animation.

The production, described as "a digital opera in three dimensions," includes live music, stage actors and a 70mm computer-animated film, viewed stereoscopically through custom-designed polarized glasses.

We start this series with *Monsters Of Grace*, a new, experimental production combining the theatrical direction of Robert Wilson, the music of composer Philip Glass and the 3-D stereoscopic animation of Kleiser-Walczak Construction Company (KWCC). The production, described as "a digital opera in three dimensions," includes live music, stage actors and a 70mm computer-animated film, viewed stereoscopically through custom-designed polarized glasses.

Beta Testing

Monsters of Grace 1.0 held its world premiere on Wednesday, April 15, 1998 at UCLA's Royce Hall in Los Angeles. Playing on the metaphor of software releases, the opening show is dubbed the "Beta 1.0" version because the production is a work in progress which will change as it tours to audiences around the world. The opening performance which we saw featured eight animation scenes (about 35 minutes of film) which have been completed for the 13-scene show. As more animation is completed, film will replace live stage scenes. The animation was and is being created on Silicon Graphics O2 workstations using Alias/Wavefront's Maya as well as Alias, TAV, Explore, Dynamation, Kinemation and Composer software. The film's characters, or "Synthespians" (a term trademarked by KWCC to describe virtual actors), were created by adding 3-D scans of live actors' heads to key frame-animated bodies. Motion-capture has not yet been used, but co-director Diana Walczak says they are "entertaining the idea" of using



Organizers of *Monsters of Grace's* premiere at UCLA's newly renovated performance space, Royce Hall, staged this photograph of the audience outfitted in polarized lens 3-D glasses used for viewing the stereoscopic 3-D animation. Photo courtesy of IPA.

motion-capture technology for one of the as yet uncompleted scenes featuring multiple characters.

High Tech Meets High Art

"We usually deal with commercial projects which are very short in length and high in cost," said film co-director Jeff Kleiser, whose company, Kleiser-Walczak Construction Company (KWCC), specializes in high-end computer animation for film, educational projects, television and theme park attractions. "We are using the same technology used currently in feature films and in theme park rides to create the visual aspects of this opera." But don't expect to see flashy, loud graphics. "Instead of inundating the viewer

with sensational information, *Monsters of Grace* gives the viewer the opportunity to explore and reflect through sight and sound per Diana Walczak. KWCC, which has been working on the animation for *Monsters of Grace* since September 1997 (and in development with Wilson and Glass since October 1996), is aiming to complete all 13 scenes (about 70 minutes of film) by September, in time for a scheduled performance near Washington, D.C. The studio is also currently in production on a 3-D stereoscopic ridefilm for Universal's new theme park in Orlando, Florida.



**One of the computer animated scenes in *Monsters of Grace 1.0*.
Photo courtesy of IPA.**

The production is a work in progress which will change as it tours to audiences around the world.

Meditation at 24 Frames Per Minute

In a lecture preceding the opening performance, the creators described the show as a kind of meditation. The animation itself is in extreme slow motion, so slow that one wonders if it is really moving at all. It's more like 24 frames per minute than the film speed of 24 frames per second. But as time progresses, scenes change and new views become apparent. The imagery is abstract in meaning, seemingly random in placement, yet hyper-realistic in its portrayal of real objects. A little boy rides a bicycle past glowing houses at dusk. A severed hand opens its fist and is

sliced by a floating blade. A Japanese tea tray floats in mid-air and turns into television static. A sleeping polar bear is caressed by a child's hand. A helicopter and a bird fly over the Great Wall of China. And in a dramatically different scene, multicolored lines move gracefully across the screen like a motion painting by Oskar Fischinger. What does it all mean? This, according to creators, is open to the viewer's interpretation. "The visuals are simply to help us listen to the music," said Robert Wilson, "Hopefully with this parallelism, the two elements can reinforce one another without having to decorate or illustrate." Philip Glass, who incorporated English translations of Sufi poetry into the music, said that any apparent cooperation of the images and the lyrics are purely coincidental. He said, "The words don't illustrate. If they do it's by accident."

Art for the People

"I consider *Monsters of Grace* to be 21st century theater," said Jedediah Wheeler, the show's producer, "[it] will appeal to a new generation of theater audiences

who may not be familiar with the work of Glass or Wilson, but who will be excited by the digital process." With this in mind, *Monsters of Grace* is being brought not only to the cosmopolitan cities where Glass and Wilson's work is well-known (London, Munich), but also to areas which do not often see experimental theater

works, such as Columbus, Ohio; Madison, Wisconsin; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Iowa City, Iowa; Lubbock, Texas and Tempe, Arizona. Ultimately, after all film production is complete, plans call for *Monsters of Grace* to exist in purely digital form as a CD-Rom, DVD piece, 3-D enhanced web site or VR installation. Currently, *Monsters of Grace* information and show dates are available on the web site, www.extremetaste.com.

**"I consider *Monsters of Grace* to be 21st century theater,"
said Jedediah Wheeler, the
show's producer.**

What else should we dig? Every month, *Animation World Magazine* will highlight the most interesting, exciting happenings in animation, in "Dig This!" Send us your ideas, suggestions, videos, products or works-in-progress today. You dig?

Wendy Jackson is associate editor of Animation World Magazine.

D'Oh!

I just wanted to say that at the beginning of the page about the *Virtual Springfield* game (Toledo 2.7), it says, "If you remember truckzilla..." Actually, it's truckasaurus.

I just wanted to let you know. Otherwise, the article is great.

Thanks,
A Simpsons Fan

More About Paper

I want to thank Helen Driscoll for sharing her views and insights on paper (editor@awn.com

3.1). It is apparent that she is passionate about this subject and I can appreciate this sort of passion. Although Helen has some strong feelings with regard to the current state of paper manufacturing in North America, it is the only viable option available to large users, including animation studios, who require a consistently high quality product. The need for this consistent quality control in the finished product makes it absolutely essential that the raw materials and the manufacturing process itself be as 'controllable' as possible. This is a loose statement at best since paper manufacturing is not an 'exact science' and variation in the final product is inevitable. They may have their shortcomings, but pulp-based papers do offer the ability to control the characteristics of the finished product moreso, that is, than the more traditional papers and paper making methods Helen spoke of in her letter to the editor.

I did enjoy her letter, however, and gleaned new insights into the fascinating world of paper making.

Stephen Hagel,
Manager, Sales & Marketing
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HOW TO BE FURRIFIC!

by Bill Fleming

Is your 3-D character having a bad hair day? There seems to be an epidemic of bad hair on 3-D characters. Of course, it's not the fault of the artists as much as it's the technology. While 3-D programs have come a long way, they have yet to really perfect hair effects. Hair is the defining element of many creatures. Unfortunately, for the 3-D artist, this presents a real challenge since hair and fur in reality are comprised of tens of thousands of tiny fibers.

Ten years ago 3-D hair was nothing more than a plastic shell.

Therefore, to make hair appear realistic, you literally need to have the same number of fibers on your 3-D character. This can be a real challenge, particularly if you plan to model the hair by hand. Another complication of hair is the fact that it tends to vary in length, density, color and thickness. It can be curly, kinky, straight, wavy or even braided. Plus, there's the hair-style to consider. Not too many characters look appealing with a "bowl" cut. As you can see, there are many factors to consider in creating hair for your 3-D character. So, how do you go about creating the natural

hair look for your characters? Well, let's take a look at the growth of 3-D hair over the years and the many techniques that have evolved along the way.

The Evolution of 3-D Hair

Ten years ago 3-D hair was nothing more than a plastic shell. This is the original 3-D hair, which was rather stylized and cartoony. The hair was created with simple geometry that formed the volume of the hair as shown in Figure 1.1.

Typically, bump maps were used to simulate strands of hair but they were often no more than straight lines, which left the hair looking plastic and plain. This, of course, is a nice look for cartoon characters but there are times when a more natural effect is needed, such as in those high budget Hollywood effects films. Another problem was that the hair couldn't be animated. It just sat there, solid as a rock and lifeless. The good news about this style though was that every 3-D program was capable of creating it. There were some very innovative artists who styled the mesh to create simulated hair styles such as the popular Japanese anime look, which was definitely a good look, but still wasn't animatable. This primitive hairstyle was the only option for many years until 1989 when we made the next leap in technology by developing the Clip Map.

Clip Map Hair

A clip map is a black and white image that's used to clip portions of a model. The white



Figure 1.1: Stylized hair. Image created by and © Bill Fleming.

areas of the clip map represent the part of the model that will be clipped, or cut off. Figure 1.2 shows a clip map and the accompanying color map for hair.

Using clip maps, we could simulate hair strands by clipping fine lines in a hair mesh. This, coupled with a nice hair image map, made it possible to create relatively realistic hair in still images, like the one shown in Figure 1.3.

Ten thousand hair strands can really rack up the polygons.

Several programs are capable of creating clip map hair such as Hash's Animation Master, LightWave, 3D Studio MAX, Image, Softimage, and several others. Clip map hair looked much better than the classic stylized hair but the hair was flat, lacking any depth. It also presented the same problems in regard to animation. The hair still hung lifeless. Well, the animation problem was temporarily solved by the introduction of bones in 1990.



Figure 1.2: A clip map and its color map. Image created by and © Bill Fleming.

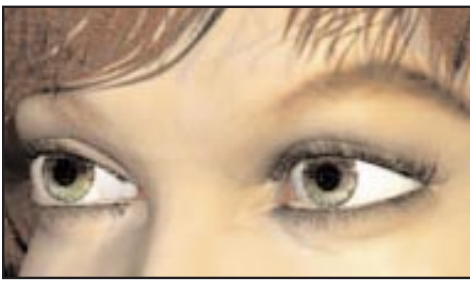


Figure 1.3: The effects of clip map hair. Image ©1998 Virtual Personalities, Inc

Bones allowed us manually to move the hair mesh to produce movement. Of course, the only shortcoming was that the hair moved in large clumps rather than strands waving in the breeze. Basically, we could make a polygon ponytail wiggle in the wind but it had to move as a single unit, rather than as many hair strands whipping around. The next step in hair evolution was the introduction of geometry replication.

Geometry Hair

Geometry replication utilities made it possible to build a single strand of hair and replicate it over the surface of the mesh. This was a significant improvement in 3-D hair styling but the hair tended to appear rigid and moved without the implications of physics as we can see in Figure 1.4.

Generally, it looked artificial because the hair was typically sticking straight out from the head like



Figure 1.4: Basic geometry hair. Image created by and © Bill Fleming.

a ball of spikes. Many programs support geometry hair such as LightWave, 3D Studio MAX, Softimage and Alias PowerAnimator. This technique evolved to the point where these replicated strands could be styled with random effects such as jitter, contour, curl and kink. Contour was the most significant addition since it allowed us to mold the hair strands to the shape of the head. These new tools were provided in the form of plug-ins such as MetroGrafx's Fiber Factory for LightWave, AFX's Furrific for RayDream Studio and Peter Watje's Scatter for 3D Studio MAX. Of course, we still had little control over the actual hairstyle so a salon cut was out of the question but we could achieve some great effects as seen in Figure 1.5.

The best solution for creating animated hair is the use of particle systems.

Soon technology advanced and we were able to perform styling on the hair strands, but then we ran into the problem of exceedingly high polygon counts. Ten thousand hair strands can really rack up the polygons. There was also the problem of animating these hairs. While morph targets enabled us to move the hair, it was all moved in one big motion rather than randomly shifting like hair does in reality. One solution to this problem was to use a small, animated fractal displacement map to randomly shift the hair. This actually worked very well to simulate the effects of wind on the hair but offered no solution for simulating the movement of hair when the body of the character moved.

To solve this problem, animators used "control" objects to animate the hair. Basically, several con-

trol hairs were created, which affect the movement of many other hairs through the use of instancing. Instancing allows one to make reference copies of objects. One has a single object that controls the movement of several others. With this technique, one could have a group of hairs on the top of the head controlled by a reference object and another group on the side of the head controlled by yet another reference object. This is a bit of a tedious way to animate but the result is more controlled than displacement mapping.

Another solution to animating geometry hair is the use of soft body dynamics, which allows one to move the hair naturally with collision detection to prevent the hair from penetrating the head and body. Both Maya and 3D Studio MAX have soft-body dynamics systems. The Maya soft-body system is available as an FX upgrade while the MAX soft-body system is a plug-in called Hypermatter, developed by Second Nature Systems. The only shortcoming of both the soft-body and "control object" techniques is that they tend to affect groups of hairs rather than individual strands. Of course, the effect is certainly better than the hair being motionless.

One of the main drawbacks



Figure 1.5: Advanced geometry hair. Image created by and © Bill Fleming.



Figure 1.6: Fur created with the Shag: Fur plug-in for 3D Studio MAX. Image created by and © Bill Fleming.

of geometry hair is the hit on render times. Since the hair is made of actual geometry, it can really impact the render time, particularly if one is animating the hair. To resolve this problem environmental hair effects were created.

Within a year the now unattainable particle hair systems will be available on many of the mid-range 3-D programs.

Environmental Hair

Environmental hair is considerably faster to animate since actual geometry isn't created. Both Softimage and 3D Studio MAX introduced environmental hair options in 1997.

Environmental hair is available in 3D Studio MAX through the Shag: Fur plug-in created by Digi-mation. Shag: Fur uses image maps to determine exactly where the fur is applied, the density, color, thickness, direction, leaning and bend of the hairs. What's more, separate texture maps can be used for most of these options to provide complete control. For example, a texture map of a tiger skin can be used for fur color so that the fur hairs derive their color from the map image, while a separate map can be used to control where the hairs are thick and thin. Almost all of

these parameters are animatable, so subtle motion, growing and color changes are all possible. Of course, Shag: Fur does not do dynamics or any type of automatic movement but it does create some very convincing hair effects as shown in Figure 1.6.

The environmental hair solution for Softimage is included in Mental Ray. Mental Ray is similar to Shag: Fur but it has one shortcoming in that it doesn't calculate the strands on the back of the object. Therefore, when your character/creature turns, the strands on the front of the body will disappear.

The best solution for creating animated hair is the use of particle systems.

Particle Hair

Particle hair is the most commonly used method for creating the Hollywood hair effects like the ones seen on the lion's mane in *Jumanji* and the werewolf in *American Werewolf in Paris*. Unfortunately, particle-based hair systems are typically custom developed for specific film and broadcast projects.

Particle hair systems work by emitting particles from the skin until they reach a death point which is the desired length. Then, using collision detection and physics the system controls the hair so it behaves naturally by moving and reacting with the character. For example, in the scene in *American Werewolf in Paris* where the werewolf exits the fountain and shakes the water off, the particle hair is reacting to the physics of the werewolf's movement.

There is one commercial particle hair system currently available from Alias/Wavefront called Compuhair. Compuhair calculates hair as soft volumetric tubes with a fuzzy volume, something like a cloud with

soft edges. Compuhair allows one to control the hair bounce through the use of control spheres. There are several particle hair systems in development for other products such as Nordisk Film's *Fur Designer* for Softimage, which renders hair on a separate pass and then composites it back on the scene.

Try Experimenting

As you can see, there are a number of options for creating hair on your characters. It really depends on the volume of hair and the animation you'll be doing. Oh yes, and how deep your pockets are. Computer graphics hair effects have come a long way in a short time. Within a year the now unattainable particle hair systems will be available on many of the mid-range 3-D programs. Until then, try experimenting with the many options that are currently available, you'll be surprised at the effects you can achieve.

Bill Fleming is president of Komodo Studio, a 3-D studio specializing in photorealism. He is the author of many 3-D books, including the 3D Photorealism Toolkit, published by John Wiley & Sons. He also serves as editor in chief of Serious 3D magazine, a 3-D magazine featuring nothing but intermediate/advanced tutorials for artists interested in taking their 3-D graphics to the next level. To find out more about Serious 3D, visit www.serious3d.com.

Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Rotoscoping in the Modern Age

by Marian Rudnyk

Editor's Note: Due to legal restrictions at Paramount, this article contains a limited selection of images from the film, Titanic.

Visual effects, these days, can take on many varied forms. Far beyond the classic effects model work of legends such as Ray Harryhausen, today's effects can involve anything from complex scale and sub-scale model work to digital 3-D modeling, 2-D compositing and digital rotoscopic animation. Quite often the simplest visual element in a movie, discounted as real, can actually be the product of extensive visual effects work. This is especially true in the visual effects-driven movie world where rotoscoping can play an important role.

Some of the most subtle visuals, however, were also CG based and involved extensive use of techniques based in traditional animation.

In big-budget Hollywood films, visual effects are de rigueur. From the splashy effects in the *Star Wars* saga re-issues or *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World* to the story-serving and subtle yet stunning effects of James Cameron's *Titanic*, we not only wonder at what's real and what's not, but now expect to see new and innovative visual effects. A Twentieth Century Fox/ Paramount film of massive proportions, *Titanic* is the stand-out example of the future of effects work. From

what is assuredly some of the most elaborate model work ever done for a movie to the extensive work in digital 3-D CGI (computer generated imaging), *Titanic* is replete with cutting edge visual effects. Among its CG effects are the first ever truly realistic "digital ocean" or "digital water," virtual stunt extras created in CG, and state-of-the-art use of motion tracking. This is not to mention all of the breathtaking work done surrounding the actual ship itself. Some of the most subtle visuals, however, were also CG-based and involved extensive use of techniques based in traditional animation.

Rotoscoping Then and Now

Rotoscoping is a process which involves tracing stages of movement from live-action film, to attain a realistic motion in animation or visual effects. Unlike the rotoscoping done in traditional cel animation (most recently evident in Twentieth Century Fox's *Anastasia*), the roto work in *Titanic* served a related but different purpose. Traditional animation rotoscoping is used to heighten or accentuate movement by imbuing it with a more life-like quality. Usually this is accomplished by first filming scene elements in live-action form, that mimic the intended movement within the animated film to be produced. Once filmed, say a scene with a couple dancing, animators trace off each frame, often in silhouette, and then "apply" this to their animated characters. The effect



makes the animation literally come to life. The danger, however, in using this technique, is that often scenes that are rotoed stand out from others that are developed "by hand."

In the 2-D digital, or CG world, the idea of movement is still critically important. Compositing is the process by which separate film elements, like footage of a landscape and footage of a spaceship, are combined to form the final seamless image of the spaceship flying over the landscape. Rotoscoping has become an integral part of the compositing process. Though digital artists still need to worry about animating, they are now not so involved in character work as they are in a process called matting. In its simplest form a matte can be nothing more than a blocked part of a film frame; a protected area that is later filled with an element not in



The sinking *Titanic*. © 1997 Paramount Pictures and Twentieth Century Fox. All rights reserved.

the originally shot footage or from whatever effects work will be done to the rest of the image. Mattes are an integral part of compositing. The exceptions are computer “click-and-fills,” where the computer can be simply told to fill in any area of a given color, or value, with a given element. For example, “Fill in all white areas with water.” In digital rotoscoping, one is doing much more than a simple green or blue screen type effect, which in and of itself is actually nothing more than a basic compositing effect.

Digital rotoscoping uses 2-D information in order to create or support a 3-D effect. An animated matte is created and used to block, or protect, a specific film element so that a 3-D composite can be achieved using a 2-D technique. The effects teams involved in James Cameron’s *Titanic*, made incredible use of this technique to create some very subtle effects.

Creating Breath

Some of *Titanic*’s most delicate effects were created by visual effects and digital animation powerhouse Blue Sky|VIFX, a division of Twentieth Century Fox. Blue Sky|VIFX was charged with three

the night of the ship’s sinking. Despite their realistic subtlety, *Titanic*’s breath sequences posed many technical challenges. Among them were the sheer number of puffs of breath that needed to be created and integrated into a staggering number of shots, all with a consistent quality that maintained the integrity of a given sequence while conforming to an over-all whole: the movie itself.

Filmed near the relatively warm waters of the Pacific, many of *Titanic*’s shots lacked the frosty breaths that were surely present when the liner went down in the ice-chilled waters of the North Atlantic in 1912. The challenge was to add these breaths using 2-D compositing, yet still have them appear “3-D”. To accomplish this a variety of digital technical teams were assembled, among them a group of digital rotoscope artists.

The first task at hand was to acquire breath elements. These were shot using “breath actors”. These breaths were then scanned by computer and assembled into a breath library. With the actual film shots in hand, the work of marrying the two into one could begin. To create the effect or illusion of 3-

basic types of shots for *Titanic*: those depicting the ship’s immense engine room, star fields, and puffs of human breath which were critical in conveying the cold temperatures on

D each shot had to be individually evaluated for placement. Would the breath, for example, come out of a person’s mouth, but be in front of one person yet in back of another? Complicating things further was the fact that as a given person’s head turned, the breath’s 3-D placement would also need to change. Critical as well, was the selection of the correct breath. Was it affected by wind, as in the shots of the sailors in the *Titanic*’s crow’s nest? Additionally, James Cameron wanted “breaths that act.” In other words, breaths that would accentuate the dialogue or action. This meant extra special attention was required to fulfill this unique vision. It was such unparalleled attention to detail that would become *Titanic*’s hallmark. With the shot evaluated and the breath(s) selected, the meticulous job of digital rotoscoping could begin.

**James Cameron wanted
“breaths that act.”**

The Process

If, for example, the given breath needed to go in front of someone or something, that was relatively easy because the breath could simply be “slapped” over the given area. Usually, though, that same breath would have to also fall behind, say, someone’s moving shoulder. The compositor, or the digital rotoscope artist, would have to create an animated matte that exactly followed the movement of this shoulder, covering it to its precise edge. If the head turned then perhaps still more mattes would have to be created. Each matte, a tracing of the image element it was protecting, would then be rotoscoped to move *exactly* as did that image element, i.e. the shoulder. To



The giant set of *Titanic*. © 1997 Paramount Pictures and Twentieth Century Fox. All rights reserved.

accomplish this type of roto matte a digital artist typically sets up a series of key frames, much as a traditional animator does. The computer can then, by calculation, interpolate the necessary inbetweens. Unfortunately, this interpolation was not always completely "on." This would require a digital artist to go manually through and key every frame. Not precisely locking down an animated or roto-scoped matte could lead to a jittery element or effect, such as a breath, that would appear incorrectly placed among the shot's digital layers.

In *Titanic*, some of the most challenging rotoed scenes were the close-ups of Jack and Rose, where



Actors spent much of the filming time wet and probably chilly, but simulated cold breaths still had to be added to the final footage. © 1997 Paramount Pictures and Twentieth Century Fox. All rights reserved.

even a slight roto error would easily become evident. This was also true of some of the deck scenes, where many rotoed mattes had to move

not only correctly, but allow for placement of both breaths as well as a night sky filled with stars. Once fully rotoed, breaths placed, and mattes removed, compositors could then proceed to adjust any number of parameters including breath speed, density/opacity, as well as any necessary color-corrections.

In digital roto-scoping, one is doing much more than a simple green or blue screen type effect...

Perhaps this epic effects-laden movie's greatest effects legacy is not all the compositing, or roto-scoping, or 3-D modeling, etc. that was done. It is not the effects themselves that are what's important. What is most important is the story. Effects are there to serve story. More than any other movie before it,

Titanic illustrates this best. Yes, one can have incredibly stunning, hauntingly beautiful, or even explosive visual effects, but if one doesn't serve the story with these effects, use them to bring the story to life without overpowering it, then all one has is effects. When the effects stand behind the story and serve it, then one has a film that stands as a milestone in the effects industry.

Venture back to the November 1996 issue of *Animation World Magazine* to read an interview with James Cameron about his work on the *Terminator 2-3D* stereoscopic 3-D ride for Universal Studios.

Marian Rudnyk is a former NASA astronomer and planetary photo-geologist who worked at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. He was part of NASA's PCAS (Planet Crossing Asteroid Survey) Program where he was an asteroid hunter. He also participated as a member of NASA's Achievement Award winning multi-mission imaging team on the Voyager at Neptune mission, as well Magellan at Venus and many others. Making a transition into the animation industry, he began as a traditional animator freelancing on such projects as a Levis commercial for Acme Filmworks. He currently works as a digital artist, science consultant and freelance writer. He has written for the World Book Encyclopedia and David Wallechinski's People's Almanac of the 20th Century. His current film credits include Titanic, Home Alone 3, and Armageddon.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

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In Peril: France's 3-D Industry

by Georges Lacroix

Editor's Note: As we reported last month, Fantôme, one of France's premiere producers of 3-D animation, is facing the possibility of closing its doors. Georges Lacroix, President and Founder of Fantôme, alerts Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Minister of the Economy, Finance and Industry, and Mrs. Catherine Trautmann, Minister of Culture and Communication, to a national problem in his open letter to them.

An Open Letter

To Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Minister of the Economy, Finance and Industry and to Mrs. Catherine Trautmann, Minister of Culture and Communication:

Today's pioneers and inventors express themselves thanks to the mastery of new digital processes.

France, during the debate over AMI [The Multilateral Accord on Investment, which has been in negotiation since 1995, will constitute a framework for international investments and will include high standards of liberalization and protection of an investment, as well as a mechanism to solve controversies. It will be applicable to all forms of investments made worldwide by investors from any party or country. The complete AMI text is available on-line at www.monde-diplomatique.fr/md/dossiers/ami/plan.html], became one of the countries fighting to protect its cultural identity and its ability to express itself freely through creative and independent

productions.

There is a creative world evolving that deserves your attention, one where the animation and special effects of French companies has great potential.

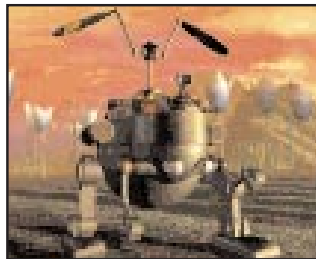
So, what's the use of this struggle over AMI if these companies are deprived of the means to develop and make their mark in an environment unfavorable to their growth?

"In the future, all animated films will be made in 3-D and we'll only use 2-D for aesthetic or artistic reasons." This prophetic statement by Bran (sic) Ferren (Walt Disney Imagineering) was not meant to repudiate traditional animation, which is still widely enjoyed, but to confirm the importance of emerging imaging technologies in the information age, and in the areas of communication, entertainment, education, training, virtual reality, etc.

France, the pioneer in the invention of cinema thanks to the Lumière brothers, of special effects thanks to Georges Méliès, and of animation thanks to Emile Reynaud and Emile Cohl, can't ignore this prophesy.

Today's pioneers and inventors express themselves thanks to the mastery of new digital processes.

There needs to be a rapprochement of the spheres of culture, communication, industry, telecommunications and, of course, finance and economy to ensure the growth of enterprises specializing in new imaging technologies. This sec-



Insektors © Fantome

tor is expanding on an international level and that means French jobs, cultural heritage and exports.

In the last years, the government's lack of awareness of this sector's potential has lead

to the demise of several firms and to more entrepreneurial foreigners taking over innovative projects that were first started in France.

The 3-D animation software Explore, developed by INA and Thomson, has been sold to America's Wavefront. The 2-D animation software Tic-Tac-Toon, has gone to Toon Boom of Canada. Numerous films using these new technologies have had difficulties finding financing and some have had to be abandoned.

Today, let's discuss the fate of Fantôme. Started in 1985, Fantôme was a pioneer in animated television series composed entirely of 3-D imagery, even before Pixar's and Walt Disney's Toy Story broke box office records.

I believe France has an enormous potential for creative production.

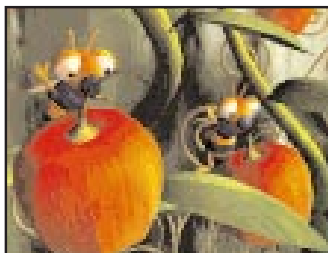
Besides an Emmy, Fantôme has garnered more than 40 international prizes. Programs based in 3-D imagery have been made for varying audiences: Geometric Fables (50 3-minute segments) with Pierre Perret; Insektors (26 13-minute segments) which has sold in 160 countries; and Everyone in Orbit with

Nicolas Gessner (260 2-minute segments). Our production partners have included France 3, Canal+, la Cinquième and Disney Channel France.

Currently, financed and soon to be financed 3-D series total 60 million French Francs [roughly \$10 million U.S.]. Sales of our library to product derivatives such as VHS video and DVD are being pursued aggressively. With so much activity, Fantôme should be prosperous.

In spite of these creative and productive capabilities, in spite of its project slate, its international reputation, prestige and enormous potential, Fantôme could disappear, along with other firms who can't find the necessary ingredients for growth in France:

- Risk capital and specialized development with industry expertise and the means to invest in lead-edge firms;
- Bullish banks that should be better informed about our jobs;
- An opening in the Ministries of Culture and Industry is needed to take up the financing of programs and the growth of enterprises;
- A National Center of Film with a large enough budget to support content creators working in new imaging technologies;
- Broadcasters encouraged to invest in innovative programs;
- An Institute for the Financing of Film and Culture ever mindful of its cultural mission and with the power to support banks seeking to invest in progressive firms and projects.



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Industry professionals and the Union of Film and Animation Producers have undertaken a study about the contribution of new technology on animation and special effects, both on the level of content and form. A slate of propositions will soon be presented to the appropriate ministers.

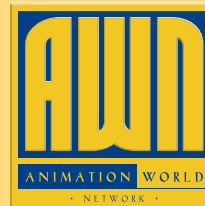
Professionals in Europe have gotten the attention of Programme Média 2, which has in turn asked its animation division, Cartoon, to draft a report on the measures needed to accompany the development of EEC firms.

I call on France to use all available means to participate in the formidable mosaic of programs going on internationally.

French firms have what it takes. The last Imagina Festival in Monte Carlo showed a cavalcade of digital images and special effects as well as spectacular student films. These French enterprises seek to develop and create original content for television series, feature films, and interactive programs in new media.

They must be allowed to enhance the national patrimony and must not be simply service providers for television commercials and prestigious American films.

They have the potential to create ambitious programs capable of reaching international audiences. They could take advantage of improved French education in imaging technology. Centers of education such as Arts Décoratifs, Université de Paris VIII, CFT Gobelins, Adac, SupInfoCom of Valenciennes, the CNBDI of Angoulême, Poitiers and Réunion are of



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note. Also worth noting would be the dynamism in regions that support animation firms, like in Arles, Montpellier, Valence and Réunion. To keep developing, these schools and regions need to rely on stable industry support.

In the meantime, is there a place in France for leading-edge firms seeking to produce original and ambitious projects in new imaging technologies or will they have to go to other lands like the others before them?

I believe there is a place for them. The government will hear us. Measures announced for the advancement of France in the information and communication age promises growth. I only hope it's not too late.

Sincerely,
Georges Lacroix
President and
Founder of
Fantôme



Georges Lacroix

My Closing Thoughts: A Need for International Cooperation

I believe France has an enor-

mous potential for creative production. Rather than turning away from opportunities, it should structure this nascent industry, relying on the support of Europe, so as to collaborate with the rest of the world on international projects.

Being international today is essential for business, but it does not have to mean losing one's cultural identity.

In the Internet age, nothing would be worse than cultural homogeneity. Everyone benefits from the opportunity of self-expression. Americans know this well; they are always looking for new talent and new artists to thrill us. I have a lot of admiration for what the Americans and the Japanese accomplish. However, we must be aware that these technologies are commonly employed in other countries such as India, Korea, Taiwan, as well as many others. Georges Lacroix France must not forget this and I call on it to use all available means to participate in the formidable mosaic of programs going on internationally.

Translated from French by Andy Hadel.

If you would like to contact the Ministers, you may reach them at:
The Prime Minister: <http://www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr>

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<http://www.finances.gouv.fr/courrier.htm>
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For more information about Fantôme, visit their website, hosted on AWN or e-mail Georges Lacroix at lacroix@fantome.worldnet.fr

Georges Lacroix is President and Founder of Fantôme.

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L'industrie française de l'animation 3D en danger

par Georges Lacroix

Note de la rédaction : Comme nous l'avions signalé le mois dernier, Fantôme, société leader dans l'animation 3D, est menacée de disparition. Dans une Lettre Ouverte, Georges Lacroix, Président et Fondateur de Fantôme, alerte Monsieur Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Ministre de l'Economie, des Finances et de l'Industrie, et Madame Catherine Trautmann, Ministre de la Culture et de la Communication, sur un problème national.

Lettre ouverte

à Monsieur Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Ministre de l'Economie, des Finances et de l'Industrie, et à Madame Catherine Trautmann, Ministre de la Culture et de la Communication

Les magiciens et les illusionnistes d'aujourd'hui s'expriment grâce à la maîtrise des nouveaux procédés numériques.

La France, au travers de la bataille de l'AMI fait partie des pays qui luttent pour leurs spécificités culturelles et pour pouvoir s'exprimer dans le pluralisme de la création et de la production indépendante. [L'accord multilatéral sur l'investissement, en négociation depuis 1995, constituera un cadre complet pour l'investissement et comportera des normes élevées de libéralisation

et de protection de l'investissement ainsi qu'un mécanisme de règlement des différends. Il sera applicable à toutes les formes d'investissements effectués par les investisseurs des pays parties. Le texte intégral de l'AMI est disponible sur Internet à l'adresse suivante: www.monde-diplomatique.fr/md/dossiers/ami/plan.html]

Il est un monde créatif et en pleine évolution qui mérite votre attention, celui du cinéma d'animation et des effets spéciaux numériques où les sociétés françaises ont un potentiel formidable. A quoi sert cette bataille contre l'AMI si ces sociétés n'ont pas les moyens de se développer et d'affirmer leur identité par manque d'un environnement favorable à leur croissance.

"Demain tous les films d'animation se feront en 3D et nous ne choisirons la 2D que pour des raisons esthétiques ou artistiques."

Cette phrase prophétique de Bran Ferren (Walt Disney Imagineering) n'a pas pour but bien entendu de renier l'animation traditionnelle qui nous émerveille toujours, mais elle veut confirmer l'importance que prendront demain les nouvelles technologies de l'image dans la société de l'information et dans les mondes de la communication, du divertissement, de l'éducation, de la simulation, de la réalité virtuelle etc....



Insektors ©Fantôme

La France ne peut pas ignorer cette prophétie, elle qui a joué un rôle de pionnier dans l'invention du Cinéma grâce aux Frères Lumière, des Effets Spéciaux

grâce à Georges Méliès et de l'Animation grâce à Emile Reynaud et Emile Cohl.

Les magiciens et les illusionnistes d'aujourd'hui s'expriment grâce à la maîtrise des nouveaux procédés numériques.

Il faut un rapprochement transversal des sphères Culture, Communication, Industrie, Télécommunication et bien sûr Finance et Economie pour assurer la croissance des entreprises spécialisées dans les nouvelles technologies de l'image. Ce secteur est en pleine expansion au plan mondial et cela signifie pour la France, emplois, patrimoine culturel, exportation.

Je crois que la France a un énorme potentiel de création.

Ces dernières années, l'ignorance par les pouvoirs publics du potentiel de ce secteur a conduit à la disparition de plusieurs entreprises et à la reprise par d'autres pays plus entreprenants, de projets innovants développés en France.

Le logiciel d'animation 3D Explore développé à l'Ina et Thom-

son a été revendu à Wavefront aux Etats Unis, le logiciel d'animation 2D Tic-Tac-Toon a été cédé à Toon Boom au Canada, de nombreux films imaginés à base de ces nouvelles technologies connaissent de véritables difficultés de financement et certains projets ont du être abandonnés.

Aujourd'hui c'est Fantôme qui risque de disparaître. Société pionnière créée en 1985, elle est une des premières et parmi les rares sociétés au monde à avoir réalisé des séries animées entièrement en images de synthèse 3D pour les télévisions, avant même que le superbe film *Toy Story* de Pixar et Walt Disney ne batte tous les records au box office.

Fantôme a été couronnée par plus de 40 prix internationaux, dont un Emmy Award. Elle a produit, avec France 3, Canal+, la Cinquième et le Disney Channel France, des programmes en images de synthèse pour tout public : *Les Fables Géométriques* avec Pierre Perret, 50 x 3 minutes, *Insektors* une série de 26 x 13 minutes vendue dans 160 pays, et *Tous sur Orbite* avec Nicolas Gessner, série de 260 x 2 minutes.

Elle a actuellement des projets de séries en 3D déjà financées ou en cours de financement pour

un total de 60 MF et poursuit l'exploitation de son catalogue sous forme de produits dérivés, cassettes vidéo, DVD... Fantôme devrait être une société heureuse.

Et pourtant malgré un potentiel de création et de production important, malgré ses projets, sa réputation internationale, ses consécutions, Fantôme risque de

disparaître, comme d'autres sociétés vont disparaître faute de trouver en France l'accompagnement nécessaire à leur croissance:

- un capital risque et développement spécialisé, ayant la connaissance du secteur et les moyens d'investir dans ces sociétés innovantes,

- des banques mieux informées de nos métiers et moins frileuses,

- un décloisonnement Culture /Industrie indispensable pour prendre en compte le financement des programmes autant que celui de la croissance des entreprises,

- un Centre National du Cinéma nanti d'un budget conséquent pour soutenir les entreprises qui créent du contenu en utilisant les nouvelles technologies de l'image, des diffuseurs encouragés à investir dans ces programmes novateurs,

- un Institut pour le Financement du Cinéma et des Industries Culturelles qui ne doit pas oublier sa mission culturelle et doit pouvoir garantir de façon marquée les banques qui veulent accompagner les

entreprises innovantes et leurs projets.

Les professionnels et le Syndicat des Producteurs de Film d'Animation ont entrepris une

réflexion sur l'apport des Nouvelles Technologies dans l'Animation et les Effets Spéciaux tant au niveau du contenu que du contenant. Une plate-forme de propositions sera bientôt présentée aux ministères concernés.

En Europe, les professionnels ont également l'attention du Programme Média 2. Celui-ci a chargé

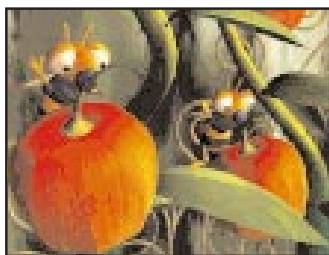
Cartoon (le pôle animation) de remettre un rapport sur les mesures nécessaires pour accompagner le développement des entreprises de la Communauté.

Les entreprises françaises ont du talent. Le dernier Festival d'Imagina à Monte Carlo l'a démontré en proposant une féerie d'images numériques et d'effets spéciaux spectaculaires, des films d'étudiants époustouflants! Ces entreprises veulent développer et créer des contenus originaux, des séries pour les télévisions, des films de long métrage, des programmes interactifs pour les nouveaux médias....

Il est essentiel qu'elles puissent enrichir le patrimoine national et qu'elles ne soient pas seulement des prestataires pour la publicité ou pour de prestigieux films américains.

Elles ont le potentiel pour créer des programmes ambitieux à vocation internationale. Elles peuvent profiter en France du meilleur enseignement pour les images de synthèse. Les centres de formation comme les Arts Décoratifs, l'Université Paris VIII, le CFT Gobelins, l'Adac, SupInfoCom à Valenciennes, le CNBDI à Angoulême, Poitiers, La Réunion sont remarquables. Il faut souligner aussi le dynamisme des Régions qui soutiennent les entreprises de l'animation à Angoulême, Valenciennes, Arles, Montpellier, Valence, La Réunion.... Pour leur développement, ces écoles et ces régions ont besoin de pouvoir compter sur un milieu industriel stable.

En attendant, y-a-t-il en France la place pour des sociétés innovantes qui veulent réaliser des projets originaux et ambitieux grâce aux nouvelles technologies de l'image ou faut-il s'expatrier comme beaucoup l'ont déjà fait ?



Insektors © Fantôme

Pour ma part, je veux y croire. Les pouvoirs publics vont finir par nous entendre. Les mesures annoncées par le Gouvernement pour faire avancer la France dans la société de l'Information et de la Communication devraient être porteuses de croissance. Je souhaite seulement qu'il ne soit pas trop tard.

Je plaide pour que la France se donne les moyens de participer à la formidable mosaïque des programmes à vocation internationale.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Madame et Monsieur les Ministres, l'expression de ma sincère et respectueuse considération.

Georges Lacroix
Président et Fondateur de Fantôme

Pour conclure, une volonté internationale:

Je crois que la France a un énorme potentiel de création. Plutôt que de se replier sur elle-même il lui faudrait structurer cette industrie naissante en s'appuyant sur l'Europe de sorte que nous puissions coopérer avec le reste du monde dans des projets à vocation internationale.

Il apparaît essentiel aujourd'hui d'être international et cela ne veut pas dire pour autant perdre son identité.

A l'heure d'Internet, il n'y aurait rien de pire que la monoculture. Chacun doit pouvoir exprimer sa personnalité pour enrichir l'autre. Les américains le savent bien, eux qui sont en constante recherche de talents nouveaux et de personnalités, pour notre plus grand plaisir. Je suis très admiratif de ce qui est fait aux Etats-Unis et au Japon et il faut

savoir que ces technologies sont parfaitement maîtrisées aujourd'hui par des pays comme l'Inde, la Corée, Taiwan et bien d'autres.

La France ne devrait pas l'oublier et je plaide pour qu'elle se donne les moyens de participer à la formidable mosaïque des programmes à vocation internationale.

Georges Lacroix est Président et Fondateur de Fantôme.

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*Pour plus d'informations sur Fantôme, visitez son site Internet. Pour envoyer un courrier électronique à Georges Lacroix:
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by Melissa Chimovitz

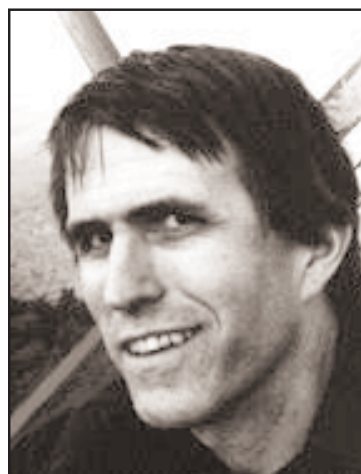
"A new method of making animated films has surfaced in the last decade, and with it a new generation of artists who use the medium primarily for self-expression. The new animators assume direct responsibility for nearly every aspect of the filmmaking process: concept, drawing, shooting, even camera-stand construction. This reclamation of creative authority contrasts sharply with the impersonal assembly-line production system of the studio cartoon industry and returns animation to its original experimental impulse as embodied in the work of Winsor McCay, Emile Cohl, Hans Richter and Oskar Fischinger."

These words, published in the preface to Kit Laybourne's *The Animation Book*, were written exactly 20 years ago by George Griffin, the figurehead widely recognized as being responsible for mobilizing this new generation into a movement in the late 1970s.

Although the independent movement had satellite members in all points of the country, nowhere was the sense of community stronger than in New York City, and at no time was that community

more unified than at the end of the '70s. With Griffin as the driving force, animators like Jane Aaron, Al Jarnow, Kathy Rose, John C a n e m a k e r, Suzan Pitt, James Whitney, and Victor Faccinto, among countless others, redefined animation with their unique personal approaches to filmmaking. Aligning themselves more with the art world than with the traditional animation establishments of the time, these filmmakers were decidedly anti-commercial, often irreverent, sometimes even superior, but always expressive.

In those days, the New York chapter of ASIFA was much more focused on studio-oriented animation and was not open to experimental, personal work. As a response, the group became Downtown's answer to ASIFA, meeting



George Griffin has been a zealous force in the New York independent scene, supporting other animators by sharing his studio facilities.

monthly in each other's apartments to screen films, discuss work-in-progress, organize events, and socialize. The hard-core group consisted of about a dozen people, but often artists invited out-of-town guests, and sometimes as many as 30 or 40 people would arrive at the meetings. "It was like a party," explains Griffin, "at which people would talk out loud to the assembled group. And then, after a while,

when the discussion became tiresome, it just sort of degenerated into a regular party."

Besides a strong sense of community, many serious projects were also generated as a result of these salon-esque meetings. At one point, the wife of a successful novelist became inspired by the group, and opened a gallery dedicated to experimental animation in New York's art district, Soho. For about two years, the gallery hosted screenings, open discussions, drawing exhibitions and art happenings.

Another notable result of the group's activities was the 1978 publication of *Frames*, a collection of drawings and statements from 69 independent American animators. Assembled by Griffin, the book acts as a visual manifesto of the independent movement. Each page reflects the poetics and style unique to each artist, and together, the collection clearly illustrates the wide diversity within the movement. While there are some common qualities that often link the work (i.e.: the use of a loose, expressive line drawn on paper rather than cels, or the frequently autobiographical content), overall, the only thing that defines the group as a whole is the resolute individualism within each artist and the general tendency to defy definition.

Naturally, students learn and apply the fundamental technical aspects of animation, however, Canemaker encourages his students to explore their individual voice.

The influence of the independent movement is still reflected in the work of many of today's filmmakers, though the animation world has changed dramatically since the '70s. One important change that might have brought about the dissipation of the movement was a new openness and acceptance of personal and experimental animation by the New York chapter of ASIFA. Currently, ASIFA is extremely involved in promoting the independent animation community, and the executive board consists of many members of the original independent movement. The turnout at last month's ASIFA-East Awards

screening was proof that New York animators support one another. Accepting her award for Grand Prize, Debra Solomon said gratefully, "This is the best place to win an award."

Perhaps the most significant changes though, are in the various new applications of independent animation, most notably, television. Venues like MTV, Nickelodeon, and The Children's Television Workshop have helped to bring fresh, innovative animation to a mainstream audience, and owe much of their success to the talents of the independent animators they employ. With the emergence of the Internet and web sites like the Absolut Vodka Experimental Animation Festival, small audiences at underground screenings and salon-style discussion groups have been replaced by a worldwide, virtual audience.

This new enthusiasm and emphasis on independent animation is a controversial issue, of course. Many feel that the loss of the community generated from a common resistance to the mainstream is a sad statement of the effects of commercialization. Others feel that these new venues represent a new respect for animation as an art-form, and new opportunities for talented, innovative artists who have long lacked the recognition they deserve.

Wherever the truth lies, one thing is certain: Twenty years later, independent animation is alive and well and living in New York City. Although most animators must make a living doing commercial work, finding grants, or teaching, the ever-stubborn New Yorker will find a way to continue making independent films. Says Griffin, "There's a kind of individualism... I mean old-

fashioned, curmudgeonly, renegade spirits who just will do it, even if there's no commercial room for it, and despite all the odds."

Unfortunately, time and space only allowed for me to speak to seven of the many animators living and working independently in the Big Apple, but the following profiles represent a diverse cross-section of old-school, new-school, experimental, and traditional filmmakers.

The following artists are profiled: George Griffin, John Canemaker, Kathy Rose, Debra Solomon, Steve Dovas, Lewis Klahr and Janie Geiser.

George Griffin: The American Independent

George Griffin, called the "paradigm of the independent animator" by Giannalberto Bendazzi, has never abandoned the principles that motivated him when he began making animated films 20 years ago. His work alone reflects two of the major characteristics of the independent movement: a responsibility to himself as an artist and to his own style, and the freedom to experiment and change that style as often as he wishes. Few artists have been as dedicated to the promotion of animation as an art-form as Griffin.

Griffin's interest in animation started with his exposure to avant-garde cinema just after college. Drawn to the radical aspirations of filmmakers like Stan Brakhage, Robert Breer, and Stan van der Beek, Griffin found that the anarchistic element of experimental film - "Forget all the rules, start from scratch, make mistakes, goof off, that's art!" - appealed to him. He began by emulating these pioneers, but was



John Canemaker's new film, *Bridgehampton*, will be included in an upcoming retrospective of his work at MoMA. © John Canemaker.

dissatisfied with what he was creating. When he began working in various commercial cartoon studios in New York, he not only had the opportunity to learn the rules he had been so eager to break, but he also recognized the growing need for rule-breaking within the animation world.

Thus began a symbiotic relationship between Griffin and traditional animation that would continue over the next twenty years. He began by extracting the basic elements of traditional cartooning - a pen, paper, a simple line and some basic movement techniques - and applying his own sensibility. He scaled animation down to its barest form, creating several flip-books and performing experiments when shooting them. He felt determined to create films that were written, drawn, and animated by only himself, thus eliminating the need for an "assembly line" production team.

As his dissatisfaction with the studio system grew (he admits that

a loathing of authority and an inability to draw like a Disney master were largely responsible for his growing distaste), so did his determination to go his own way. Once relieved of his job, he began making brilliantly innovative films that challenged the conventions of filmmaking. In films like *Head* and *Lineage*, Griffin mixes trick photography, animation and live-action to create a "film-within-a-film" kind of self-awareness. This self-reflexive approach, though he later abandoned it, was rife with the kind of irreverence that fueled his campaign for independent animation.

Although in recent years he has yielded to the reality of commercialism, peppering his personal work in with freelance commercial jobs for larger studios, Griffin's independent spirit is as stubborn as ever. His most recent film, *A Little Routine*, may lack the irreverent bite of his previous work, but preserves the element of personal exploration that has always been there. It is an endearing slice-of-life look at the

daily routine a father and daughter share before saying goodnight. This and many of his other, earlier works are now available on a video compilation called "Griffitti."

Finally, Griffin is currently developing a new film that he actually conceived 20 years ago, at the height of his independent activism, proving that what comes around truly goes around.

John Canemaker: Thoroughly Devoted

Just as George Griffin pushes and pulls against the mainstream animation world, discovering and rediscovering his relationship with that tradition, perhaps even more so does John Canemaker. His diversity, represented by his dedication to his work as a historian of early American animation (particularly Disney), and his concurrent work as a creator of personal, independent films, proves Canemaker to be one of the most thoroughly devoted figures in animation today - not to mention the busiest. Somehow, between heading the animation department at New York University, lecturing around the world on early American animation, teaching, and writing countless books, essays and articles, Canemaker has found the energy and time to continue to create the very meaningful personal films that he began making in the late '70s.

Canemaker started his career as an actor, but returned to his true love, animation, while studying communications in college. He made his first film as an undergraduate, and by the time he had finished his Master's in film in 1976 at New York University, he was already working with animators such as Derek Lamb on commercial

projects. He continued to make personal work however, and in 1978 his film, *Confession of a Stardreamer*, gained attention, and he began to establish a commercial career.

Many of Canemaker's commissioned works were very topical in nature, and were often the most satisfying for him. Films that dealt with serious issues such as child abuse, war, teen suicide, and children with cancer presented Canemaker with the challenge of finding visual solutions to very complex thematic problems. His acute sense of animation's ability to venture into the feelings of a young child in chemotherapy in a way that live-action cannot is what won him the Academy Award for *You Don't Have to Die*, a film he made for HBO.

Canemaker began teaching with Richard Proton at NYU in 1980, and in 1988 he took over the Animation Department. Naturally, students learn and apply the fundamental technical aspects of animation, however, Canemaker encourages his students to explore their individual voice. "They only have 4 precious years [in school] when they can make films, so they might as well find who they are. Then often times, the commercial projects will come to us because of who we are," says Canemaker.

This has certainly been the case with Canemaker, though the commercial projects have never been a means to an end for him; he continues to make a personal film every one or two years. Most recently, he finished *Bridgehampton*, a radiant 6 1/2-minute film inspired by the changing seasons in the garden outside his Long Island summer home. Collaborating with jazz pianist, Fred Hersch, Canemaker creates a wonderfully



Kathy Rose performs with her own animated images on screen. Photo © Kathy Rose.

vibrant visual poem that incorporates all the colors and moods of each season. The style, derived from paintings Canemaker made of his garden, is fresh, loose, and fluid, representing his preference towards a more expressive kind of animation. "I like to see process. In animation, to see on paper something change a little bit, flicker and bubble, that's what makes the drawing come to life- that is the magic. The great thing about the illusion of animation is that you don't have to do very much for people to come into the world.

"That is totally the opposite of Disney's philosophy, which is if you embellish the design and make it as real and believable as possible, people will weep when Bambi's mother dies. And they're right, too." Therein lies the Canemaker dichotomy. He admits, laughing, "I'm a little difficult to pin down. I did try character animation, but found that as I simplified things, it became more me. *Bridgehampton* is an attempt to move towards a more abstract filmmaking, and I may go totally in that direction in the future."

In the meantime, he is busy

working on several new books, including one on the storyboard artists from early Disney history, one on Disney's "Nine Old Men," and a children's book that he illustrated about his cat. In fall of 1998, the Museum of Modern Art will hold a retrospective of 20 years worth of Canemaker's work, from the commercially sponsored to the very personal, and including, of course, lectures by the artist.

While Griffin, Canemaker, and many of the other original members of that groundbreaking group of independents are still actively working in animation, for Kathy Rose, animation has become just one of many tools she employs to break still more experimental ground. By combining her many talents and passions, Rose has created a new genre of performance that mixes animation, live-action, music, and dance.

Kathy Rose: Combining Dance and Animation

As the daughter of a successful photographer in Queens, Rose's interest in art was cultivated at a very early age. "I was an artist

from the age of three," she says. "I was just totally involved in creativity and drawing." She and her brother (filmmaker Pete Rose) were encouraged by their father to experiment with film; Kathy was 16 when she started making surreal, experimental films. While in college at Philadelphia College of Art as a film major, she became interested in dance and performance, and performed with a multi-media dance troupe. Upon graduating, she became interested in the animated films of Yoji Kuri and Karel Zeman, and set out to teach herself how to animate. Working in drawing pads, she shot storyboards that became more and more complex, and eventually began to move.

Having found the outlet for her love of film and her passion for drawing, Rose attended California Institute of the Arts in the early '70s, where she found a tight-knit community of artists doing experimental animation with the help of pioneer filmmaker, Jules Engel. After three years in California, Rose eventually returned to New York, and won first prize for her film, *The Doodlers*, at the ASIFA festival. At the awards banquet, she met George Griffin and Mary Beams, and became involved in the Independent Movement that had just begun to take shape.

Self-portraiture has always played a strong role in Rose's animated films. In *Pencil Booklings* (1978), she appears in the film, at first in rotoscope form as the creator of her characters. She interacts with the little doodle-esque figures, reprimanding them when they behave badly, and even walking out of the frame when they completely frustrate her. Finally, when one of the characters tells her that if she wants to create good animated cartoons,

she must first become one, she follows the advice and transforms into one of her own characters. The work to follow seems to be a natural extension of that merger of artist and art.

Rose's work has developed into its own complex and sophisticated genre, almost defying definition.

After the death of her father, Rose no longer found animation fulfilling. While watching a double bill of Marilyn Monroe at the Bleeker Street Cinema, she realized that she wanted to perform again, and was encouraged by her then-employer, Bob [R.O.] Blechman, to mix animation and dance. When she received a NEA grant to produce a media project, she came up with *Primitive Movers*, a short performance that involved a row of animated figures, all her height, projected on a screen and dancing alongside her. The effect was a hypnotic, abstract and highly energetic piece of performance unlike anything else being done at the time. "I knew that (the piece) had to be something that would fulfill this personal craving I had to do performance, but I wasn't interested in just getting up on stage with a black leotard. I needed the color, I needed the visual input because I'm a visual artist. So, to have something that was part of my past and part of my imagination up there with me was very important."

Soon, Rose began projecting her animation upon herself and her dancers on stage, and the mixture of animation and dance provided a new freedom of imagination and possibility. A dress worn by

a dancer could change color and pattern, fill up with water then drain itself, all to a pulsating African rhythm. Her hybrid performance style was well-received in Europe, where she often toured, as well as back at home, where she performed to a full house at New York's Museum of Modern Art in their Cineprobe series.

Although Rose feels that her new direction was a natural extension of the often irreverent, rule-breaking animation movement she was a part of in the '70s, she sometimes feels as though her work is perceived as a "wild tangent." Says Rose, "Occasionally, I get people who are very steadily ensconced in animation saying, 'Don't you think you should go back to doing animation?' And I think, 'Why would I want to do that now that I've opened up to this whole wonderful holographic world?'"

Instead, Rose's work has developed into its own complex and sophisticated genre, almost defying definition. She is currently working on a one-hour piece entitled *Kleopat'Ra*, which is rich with influences ranging from Japanese Noh theater and Butoh dance to Egyptian mythology and the Tibetan Book of the Dead. The piece is the first time Rose will incorporate both animation and live-action into her performance.

While all of these sundry cultural and aesthetic influences and the myriad of techniques Rose employs could easily cancel each other out, they are instead woven together beautifully in *Kleopat'Ra*, making the performance much more than the sum of its parts. A collaborator of Rose's says, "I'm certainly conscious of the piece being about a personal journey that's

meant to lead the audience on a journey as well.... It's definitely meant to create a whole other dimension, a whole other world."

Rose has been performing excerpts from *Kleopat'Ra* at various venues around the East Coast, most recently at New York's historical avant-garde performance space, The Kitchen. The piece, which Rose started creating in 1993, will be complete in December of this year.

Debra Solomon: The Best Medicine

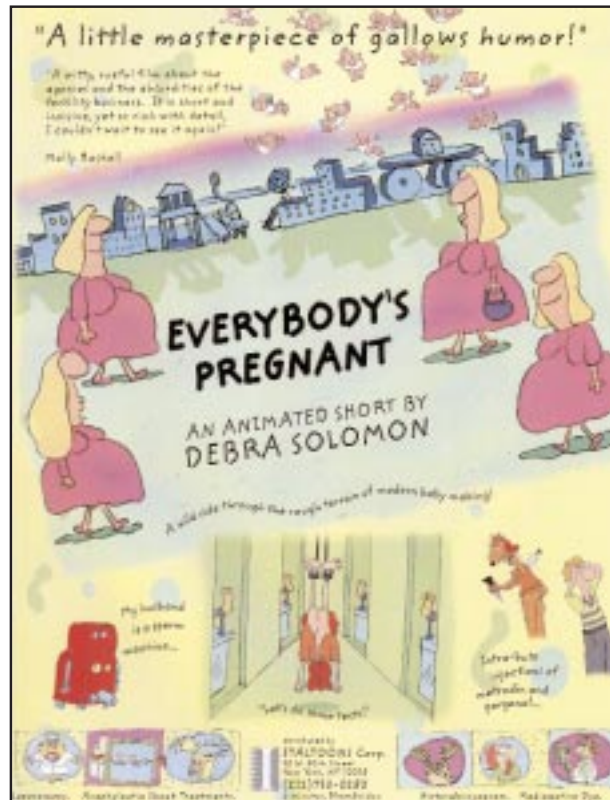
After studying illustration at Pratt University in New York, Solomon spent several years working as a freelance illustrator. She soon noticed that her work was decidedly funny and would lend itself well to animation. "I had the sense that I wanted the characters I was drawing to move around and tell stories," she says, "But because I didn't really have any salable skills to get a job in a studio, and because I was so driven to do my own work (rather than someone else's in a studio-setting), I continued working as an illustrator for seven years." Her freelance experience not only furnished her with a lifetime supply of amusing anecdotes (a job cartooning for a pornographic magazine once provided her with the unexpected bonus of a loyal obscene phone-caller; he called her incessantly for three years until she patiently advised him on where to get some help), but it also enabled her to save up enough money that she was finally able to finance an independent film.

Solomon enrolled in Don

Duga's animation class, and during a trip to the Matisse exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art, she found inspiration. "You're at the exhibit, you're looking at pictures of Matisse's wife in a robe, his wife on the Quay, his wife reading a book, making dinner, doing this, doing that, and then

man to animate the film while she worked as his assistant. In this way, she was able to learn how to in-between and make her drawings move fluidly. The result is a witty, if somewhat bitter, tale of heartbreak told by a cartoon Mrs. Matisse to a rap beat.

Mrs. Matisse took two years to finish, and in the meantime, Solomon was still illustrating and producing humor books to keep her income steady. When that project was over, she animated a few commercials (most recognizable, perhaps, is the ad for Solo fabric softener: "Oops! Forgot to add the fabric softener!"), and began developing an idea for a new film. She and her husband had been trying to have a baby without success, and somehow, though she calls the experience "among the worst things that ever happened to me," she was still able to find enough humor in her situation to make a film about infertility.



Everybody's Pregnant by Debra Solomon. © D.

halfway through the exhibit, there's this little sign that says, 'Matisse moved to the South of France by himself.' And I said, 'What happened to his wife?' She was about in her 50s, and I thought, 'Well, that's about the time for gravity to have shifted everything downwards.... I know what happened to this woman!'"

With much encouragement from her husband and support from her "animation goddess," Yvette Kaplan, Solomon went to work storyboarding and writing a song for her first animated film, *Mrs. Matisse*. She hired her friend Ken Kimmel-

All of a sudden, in the middle of making this film, I thought, 'This really is my voice.' - Debra Solomon

"It is the situations in life that break your heart or are so overwhelming that are the ripest for humor, and are the places where you need to laugh the most," Solomon says. "At some point in a doctor's office, I had this very strong image of being on a meat-hook, hanging upside-down, going through his office on one of those motorized racks that they take meat



Call Me Fishmael by Steve Dovas. © Steve Dovas.

around with, and I thought, 'I have to make a film about this.'" *Everybody's Pregnant* spares no detail in illustrating the nightmarish steps some couples must take to conceive a child. All to a peppy synchronized beat, viewers hear about the grueling side effects of a particular test, a hysterosalpingogram. Another chorus blithely repeats, "My husband is a sperm machine..." In one sardonic swoop, Solomon has made a deeply personal but wonderfully humorous film that allows us to sympathize and relate to her experience, even if we've never experienced anything like it.

The film has been a success in more ways than one: it won the Grand Prize at last month's ASIFA-East awards, but more importantly, it marked a significant point in Solomon's artistic career. She says, "In all the work I ever did, all I wanted to do was find my own voice. That was always the most important thing... All of a sudden, in the middle of making this film, I thought, 'This really is my voice.'"

Steve Dovas: A New Independent

When Steve Dovas showed John Canemaker, his professor at NYU at the time, some "patently offensive

comic strips" ("vicious, evil, and post-adolescent in every possible way,"), the response was clear and direct: "You will animate!" The encouragement Dovas received from Canemaker and fellow NYU professor, Richard Protovin, was enough to launch a successful career as a freelance animator.

Over the past 15 years, Dovas has worked with some of New York's most important animators. Before graduating from NYU, he worked with John Canemaker on his 1983 film, *Bottom's Dream*. By the time Dovas left school, Canemaker had introduced him to Michael Sporn, whom he worked closely with on projects ranging from counting films for Children's Television Workshop (most notably, a counting film in which lemmings count off cheerfully as they hurl themselves from a cliff) to animated spots for HBO and MTV.

The life of a freelance animator in New York does not always prove to be conducive to realizing personal projects. "Because of a

combination of an incredible level of self-criticism and practical financial considerations, I went a lot of years without making an independent film of my own," says Dovas. "I had aspirations to pay my rent and continue buying groceries."

When Steve Dovas showed John Canemaker ... some "patently offensive comic strips," the response was clear and direct: "You will animate!"

Finally, an opportunity arose last year to produce his own personal project when the Sundance Channel approached Dovas to create a short as a promotion. Though the promotion never ended up happening, Dovas followed through with his idea for a short, and within a month, had finished *Call Me Fishmael*, his first totally independent film.

"It was something that I hadn't seen anybody do before. It seemed like a subject that was just begging to be chewed up," recalls

Dovas of his concept for *Fishmael*, which is essentially an animated "pitch." In five minutes or less, a highly animated stick-figure (played by Dovas himself) enthusiastically pitches an idea for a high-seas adventure film involving a giant fish who sings like Mel Torme. At the end of the film, a short live-action video sequence shows the fruits of the stick-figure's labors: the giant fish is played by a well-disguised oven-mitt-puppet swimming in a pool of Gatorade in Dovas' bathtub.



Lewis Klahr's Altair. © Lewis Klahr.

"I wanted to do the most expressive physical character animation that I could possibly do with as minimal a figure as I could think of," Dovas says. "This guy is minimal as a person - he has no sense of self-perspective at all. It seemed appropriate that his ideas would be fully rendered, but that he's this really crudely drawn crayon stick-figure."

Call Me Fishmael has received acclaim at festivals across the country. It was well-received at the World Animation Celebration in Los Angeles, and received an award (as well as a very hearty round of applause from peers in the audience) at April's ASIFA-East Festival.

Lewis Klahr: Master of Collage

Many New York artists found their inspiration in a generation of West Coast experimental filmmakers that preceded them. Pioneers like Harry Smith and Larry Jordan were highly influential to Lewis Klahr, whose work can be seen more as a natural extension of the experimental film tradition than of conventional animation. Like the members of the West Coast experimental movement, Klahr prefers not to delineate between live-action and animation. Instead, he refers to his work as collage filmmaking, which, when taking into account the arc of his productive career, is a very accurate description.

Klahr became interested in animation after a Whitney Museum screening of the work of Larry Jordan, whose use of nostalgic imagery, surrealistic collaged cut-outs and dream-like free-association left a lasting impression on him. At that point, however, Klahr felt he was not ready to begin making animated films. "When I saw cut-out animation, I had this sense that I

wanted to try it...it was something I had been planning for a long time. I had this feeling that I was going to do rich work in animation, but that it was not something I wanted to waste in this early period."

Instead, Klahr's first films were shot using live-action, and were exploratory and diaristic in nature. He was drawn to the singularity of vision that this kind of work promoted. Klahr delved into this "first-person" approach to filmmaking, as he calls it, and over a 6-year period, he developed a complex visual language that incorporated col-



Janie Geiser's *The Red Book*.. © Janie Geiser.

laged found-footage. The use of appropriated film imagery no doubt allowed for a natural transition into cut-out animation, and in 1987, Klahr focused his full attention to this area.

I'm curious about the way an individual consciousness changes the trajectory of meaning. - Lewis Klahr

Klahr's entry into animation was anything but timid. On the contrary, over the past eleven years, Klahr has produced a large quantity of animation. One of his most ambitious projects is a 45-minute animated film entitled *The Pharaoh's Belt*. Using cut-out images from old

magazine advertisements from the '50s, *The Pharaoh's Belt* deals with issues of childhood, gender, and identity - common themes that reappear in many of Klahr's films. He attempts to create what he calls a "cultural autobiography," an exploration of the parts of his identity he has culturally inherited.

The appropriation of nostalgic and often idealized imagery helps to illustrate this notion. "What's interesting to me about appropriation is that you are dealing with something that is received, but you are also shaping it in a way that might bring out latent meanings that are not immediately clear," explains Klahr. "I'm curious about the way an individual consciousness changes the trajectory of meaning."

Often, Klahr's films begin with hardly any preparation, and with only an indistinct idea of what will transpire under the camera. The action evolves naturally during shooting, and as Klahr sifts through his vast collection of images kept in various shoe boxes, flat files, and filing cabinets in his Lower East Side studio. The effect is a surreal juxtaposition of images, often haunting and dreamlike. "The way I compose is very intuitive. It's one of the most satisfying parts of the process because I'm in this kind of reverie.... I'm able to project myself into these images and create a whole world."

Janie Geiser: Experimental Puppetry

Multi-media artist, Janie Geiser shares this interest in evoking illusory, dreamlike worlds, and her unique visceral style translates beautifully from her illustration work to her experimental puppetry to her very personal stop-motion animated films.

After graduating as a painting major from the University of Georgia, Geiser saw a performance at the Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta that introduced her to the idea that puppetry could act as a means of personal expression, not just entertainment for children. Intrigued, she took a part-time job at the Center that summer, and spent hours organizing and studying their collection, thereby learning about puppets from all over the world.

In all of Geiser's work, it is clear that she is motivated both visually and emotionally.

Until then, the puppets, dioramas, and art objects Geiser had made were never intended for performance. When the head of the Center encouraged her to take on a theatrical project, Geiser says she became hooked. Her first foray into puppet performance was a piece based on a dream she'd had using traditional hand-and-rod puppets, and from there, Geiser continued to experiment with different styles and techniques of puppetry. Influenced by everything from Japanese Bunraku style puppetry to Indonesian shadow plays, Geiser developed a visual vocabulary combining her stylized handmade puppets and her highly intuitive storytelling technique. Her Obie award-winning work is widely recognized as having helped to promote puppetry as a respected theatrical art.

During the time that Geiser was developing her work in puppetry, she had also become interested in animation, but felt that she was too ensconced in puppetry to

be able to take on film at the same time.

Ten years later, after learning the basics of filmmaking in a course at New York's School of Visual Arts, Geiser began incorporating film into her work in innovative ways. In addition to making several live puppet films that were later projected within her live performances, she began to experiment with stop-motion animation.

In all of Geiser's work, it is clear that she is motivated both visually and emotionally. In *The Secret Story* (1996), beautifully weathered antique toys and paper dolls act as ghosts of childhood memories, evoking the imaginative inner world of a girl. Throughout are reminders of motherhood and girlhood: a yellowing dressmaker's pattern acts as a shadow play screen, as a silhouetted woman hangs paper doll dresses on a line. Although the film's narrative is non-linear and uncompromisingly personal, the poetic nature of its imagery makes it universally meaningful.

Geiser's most recent animated film, *Immer Zu* (1998), is wildly different in genre, but is equally personal and emotionally engaging. Inspired by images of espionage paraphernalia and the classic noir films of old Hollywood, *Immer Zu* is filmed in black and white, and follows the clandestine exchange of coded messages between a man and a woman while a third man lies ill in a hospital bed. Geiser's initial idea to make a film noir evolved into a complex reflection on dying when the death of her father became a strong emotional force motivating the project. Since animation, unlike theater, allows Geiser to work in meditative seclusion, the process of making *Immer Zu* was very thera-

peutic.

Geiser continues to explore various media. In the works are a live-action collaborative film project with performance artist, Sally May, two new puppet pieces, and an ongoing puppetry workshop for local New York artists, funded by a grant from the St. Ann's Arts Foundation.

Note: The on-line version of this article features Quicktime movies of animated films by New York independent animators Debra Solomon, Janie Geiser and Lewis Klahr.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.2/3.2pages/3.2chimovitznyc.html>

Melissa Chimovitz is a freelance writer with a predilection towards run-on-sentences. Armed with a degree in photography from Rhode Island School of Design, a portfolio of handmade puppets, a short animated film (Eat'm Up: A Very Short Film About Love [1997]), and a determination to become a great animator, she will enter Cal Arts' Masters Program for Experimental Animation in September 1998. In the meantime, she lives happily in Brooklyn, New York, where she is participating in Janie Geiser's soon-to-be-named puppetry lab and working on a new film.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Eight Point Star: A Mind Experience in Animation

by Marcos Magalhães

What is the real boundary between reality and imagination? As animators we frequently explore this mysterious territory, by submerging ourselves in universes totally alienated from the material world. This going back and forth between fantasy and reality sometimes provokes effects similar to those of drugs or mental disorders; which is why we keep them under control during an artistic production. But for certain people, these boundaries have vanished altogether, and are no longer meaningful or important, as they are for most of us.

Reinventing Animation Instruction

For six years, I helped Fernando Diniz, who is now 79, make *Eight Point Star*, his first animated film. In 1996 this film won three prizes in Brazil's most important film festival, Gramado's Film Festival, and was also awarded the first prize for best animated short in the Havana Film Festival.

For the past 50 years, Fernando has been living in a mental hospital in Rio de Janeiro. There he learned how to draw, paint, and sculpt, soon becoming one of the most distinctive fine artists in the city. Working and sharing moments with this artist was a profound and touching experience. I had to reinvent many of the concepts I had as an animator, in order to understand the totally different parame-

ters of time and space experienced by Fernando.

Contrary to my expectations, I met a fully dedicated artist, concentrated in his work, and very conscious of his objectives. This could sound "off the wall," but his unconditional love for researching and experimenting with art, reminded me of master artist Norman McLaren, whom I met while interning at the National Film Board of Canada. The film structured as a "show reel," presents some of the main ideas explored by Fernando and opens a window into his universe. It was very gratifying to prove that animation can be an alternative language for people with a perception of reality beyond the normal standards.

His Past and a New Beginning

Fernando grew up in a very poor and modest neighborhood, but as a child his mother would frequently take him to wealthy homes, where she worked mending Haute Couture clothing. During this period, he developed a taste for luxury and savoir-faire, and became enamored with a rich, white girl named Violeta. The young Fernando was convinced he had to conquer Violeta's heart, and so he began to study for many years to become a rich engineer.

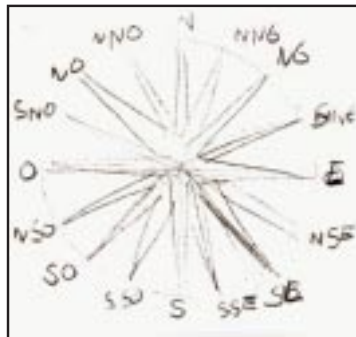
One day, as an adult, he discovered that the

woman of his dreams was engaged to another man, who was white and wealthy. Disillusioned, Fernando abandoned his studies and isolated himself from the world. Sad and lonely, he found relief in the waters of Copacabana beach, until one

sunny Sunday when he forgot that being in the nude was socially unacceptable... When the police arrived, he resisted arrest and was taken to a mental hospital where he was isolated from his family and treated with drugs and electroshock therapy, a common practice at the time.

What has made Fernando's story different from those of many other mental patients, was his encounter with a very special woman, Dr. Nise da Silveira.

What has made Fernando's story different from those of many other mental patients, was his encounter with a very special woman, Dr. Nise da Silveira. An admirer of Jung's ideas and convinced that conventional treatments for mental patients were inhumane and inefficient, Dr. Nise revolutionized a traditional public hospital when she introduced fine art studios inside the building. In 1952, she founded the Museum of Images of the Unconscious, where the patients would materialize their impressions and feelings in canvas, drawings and sculptures. The muse-



This drawing of an elaborate 16-point compass is part of Fernando Diniz's film, *Eight Point Star*. © Fernando Diniz.



Fernando Diniz. Photo by Claudia Bolshaw.

um's program flourished as a new phenomenon for the arts and science. The results of the workshops allowed Dr. Nise to interpret with surprising clarity the mental process of individuals with very little or no verbal

expression at all. When she met the quiet and absent Fernando, Dr. Nise invited him to join the workshops.

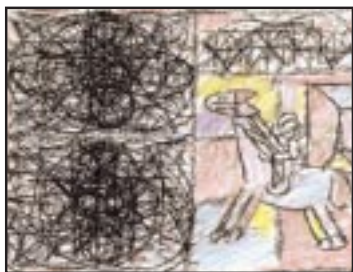
Fernando rediscovered his passion for studying and soon devoted himself to art in both body and soul. Years later he said, "I have moved to the world of images." Even though Dr. Nise's purpose never meant to evaluate the artistic quality of the patient's work, art critics soon considered Fernando and some of his colleagues as brilliant artists.

He learned how to draw, paint, and sculpt, soon becoming one of the most distinctive fine artists in the city.

The Birth of a Filmmaker

The museum's reputation, after decades of great success, attracted the attention of filmmaker Leon Hirzman, who shot a feature length documentary called *Images of the Unconscious*. The life and work of Fernando Diniz was captured in the film, and his contact with the film crew immediately provoked an obsession in him for creating cinema.

Fernando didn't have access to a camera or film, so he made drawings frame by frame, one after the other. Sometimes he would do



The dark, compressed style of this drawing of a person on a horse illustrates Fernando's tendency towards geometric images in order to reorganize his emotional state when he suffers with depression. © Fernando Diniz.

different drawings next to each other similar to a storyboard, and on several occasions he would paint with oils making different layers on the same canvas, hiding one picture under the next one, creating a film that only he could follow. When I first met Fernando in 1988, he was working on such a series of drawings. The Museum's team

wanted to document it on film, so they approached me to explore the possibilities of producing a film with an animation camera.

When I first saw Fernando's designs I had the sensation of being in front of an animator's work; beautiful animation "layouts." Some were abstract and geometrical, others were figures, but all had a high aesthetic quality and displayed exquisite colors and shapes.

I was enchanted with Fernando not only for his work, but also for his personality. It was very difficult to understand his speech because he has no teeth, but he was always very curious and always had a great sense of humor when trying to explain his work or learn new things.

Despite the communication difficulties we had, my experience as a teacher showed me I was in front of a very special student. Fernando convinced me of his capacity to direct his own creative process. From that day on I decided to help him carry out his animation onto film: a project that lasted for six years until *Eight Point Star* was completed.

Our Production Process

The first step was to give him a light table, and explain to him that from now on he had to draw on separate sheets of paper with

punch holes. I also gathered some raw stock and borrowed a 16mm camera from the animation studios at the National Foundation for the Arts (Funarte).

Fernando handed me his first scenes a few weeks later. He had filled the thousand sheets I had given him with colored drawings. Although he knew how the light table and the animation pegs worked, he didn't use them at all. However, when I flipped the animation I was surprised to find that it certainly worked. He relied on his visual memory to follow on to the next drawing, using the edge of the paper as a reference. Despite my insistence, he rarely used pegs or transparencies until the end of the process.

Every Wednesday, I would meet Fernando to revise his new scenes (500 drawings per week) and prepare them for the shoot. These scenes usually had very defined themes, and I encouraged him to create titles for each one. Some were very easy to understand, a series of animals or people playing sports; others were incomprehensible geometric scribbles, which sometimes darkened the paper completely.

According to Dr. Nise, these variations revealed his psychological condition. When he suffered with depression, he would resort to geometric images in order to reorganize his emotional state. When he felt secure and surrounded by affection, Fernando would draw more organic figures. We proved this several times, particularly in the last sequence of the film which depicts a character riding a horse past a long stretch of scenery. This scene was completely done on an animation table at the Funarte studios, and during his working hours, Fernando would avidly talk to the people around him. It was the only



A horse of a different color: When he feels secure and surrounded by affection, Fernando draws more organic figures, such as this looser image of a person riding a running horse. © Fernando Diniz

time he decided to use the animation pegs and light table. This sequence has biographical elements, with scenarios and characters from his early paintings.

Fernando's Language

We used to talk for hours about his drawings. He created a proper system of classifying the geometric figures, and he would explain this to me in his confused language. It took me a while to understand that when he talked about "pineapple," "fish," "bread," "watermelon," etc., he was referring to the form of these objects, and not their real meaning.

One day, he showed me a scene he insisted on calling "The Bottle." When I took a close look at each drawing, I came to the conclusion that he was mistaken. I couldn't identify any object that looked like a bottle. After he had insisted so much in the title, I decided to shoot the scene. When we projected the print, I was totally surprised when I perceived the silhouette of a bottle vibrating within the scribbles. From that day, it became clear to me that Fernando had an objective in mind and that he was able to control his technique to get the results he wanted.

Fernando never showed too much enthusiasm when looking at the rushes. Always seated in the first row, he would rather study the fast flashing numbers in the counter

under the screen than the picture itself. I also noticed he had a strong myopia, but he would refuse to wear glasses. It was as if he had already seen enough while creating the drawings. He could care less if he couldn't clearly see the animation. However, he loved to comment and discuss the meaning of everything he had produced. Above all, he enjoyed the applause of the audience and the positive response to his work.

The film, *Eight Point Star*, was named after Fernando Diniz' most preferred subject. Claudia Bolshaw, a graphic designer who studied Fernando's work, took over the production of the film during the last two years. She wrote her master's thesis on the film in which she deciphers the meaning of *Eight Point Star*. Fernando conceived the "star" as a graphic system that organizes space and from which all of his other figures are born. The "eight point star" is represented by a cross and two diagonals, like the British flag. Almost every time Fernando starts drawing, he begins with these basic lines. They are his guidelines to maintain the proportion and to register the movements and shapes that emerge from his animation. In almost every scene of the film, we can see the lines of the star defining the space. The star is Fernando's salvation, the system that provides him with control and security.

When we projected the print I was totally surprised when I perceived the silhouette of a bottle vibrating within the scribbles.

Thanks to his devotion to art, Fernando hasn't been treated with any psychiatric medicine for decades. He has a very productive life, and he's integrated well into the community. He still lives in the hos-

pital only because he doesn't have any family, or someone who can take care of him on a daily basis.

Eight Point Star's success in Brazil has renewed interest in Fernando's work, and posed questions regarding the rights of people with mental conditions to participate in our society. Fernando continues to live in a hospital, painting and preparing scenes for other animated films. He also plays music on the piano and harmonica, and some of his compositions were incorporated into the soundtrack of the film. *Eight Point Star's* sales on video contribute to his personal expenditures for a more comfortable life inside the hospital.

Translated from Portuguese by Alejandro Gedeon.

Note: The on-line version of this article features Quicktime movies of the animated film *Eight Point Star* by Fernando Diniz.
http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.2/3.2pages/3.2diniz_eng.html

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Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Estrela De Oito Pontas:

Uma experiência mental em animação

por Marcos Magalhães

Qual a real fronteira entre realidade e imaginação? Nós animadores exploramos freqüentemente este misterioso território, mergulhando em universos totalmente alienados do mundo material aqui fora. Este ir e vir da fantasia para o cotidiano provoca às vezes efeitos semelhantes aos de drogas ou distúrbios mentais, porém nos acostumamos a mantê-los sob o controle da realização artística. Mas existem pessoas para as quais estas linhas fronteiriças se desvaneceram, perdendo o sentido e importância que têm para a maioria.

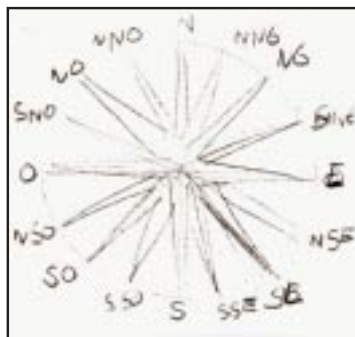
Durante seis anos ajudei Fernando Diniz, 79, a realizar *Estrela De Oito Pontas*, seu primeiro filme de animação, que em 1996 ganhou três prêmios no Festival de Gramado, o principal festival de cinema do Brasil, e também o prêmio de melhor animação no Festival de Havana. Fernando vive há mais de cinquenta anos internado em um hospital psiquiátrico, e foi lá dentro que aprendeu a desenhar, pintar e modelar, tornando-se um dos mais

conceituados artistas plásticos do Rio de Janeiro. Trabalhar e conviver com este artista foi uma experiência profunda e marcante. Precisei reformular muitos de meus conceitos como animador, para poder entender os padrões totalmente diferentes de tempo e espaço vividos intensamente por

Fernando. Ao contrário do que poderia esperar, conheci um artista totalmente dedicado, concentrado e consciente de seus objetivos. Pode parecer estranho, mas seu incondicional amor à pesquisa e à experimentação me fizeram recordar o mestre Norman McLaren, que conheci em 1981 quando estagiei no National Film Board of Canada.

O filme, construído à maneira de um "show-reel", traz à tela algumas das principais idéias exploradas por Fernando, abrindo uma janela para o seu universo. Foi muito gratificante comprovar que a animação pode ser um meio de comunicação eficiente para pessoas com uma percepção tão fora do normal.

Fernando é de origem pobre e humilde, mas quando menino freqüentava casas da alta sociedade levado por sua mãe, costureira especializada em consertos de vestidos de alta-costura. Deste período herdou o gosto pelo luxo e sofisticação, e também o amor não correspondido por Violeta, uma menina branca e rica. O jovem Fernando pôs em sua cabeça a idéia



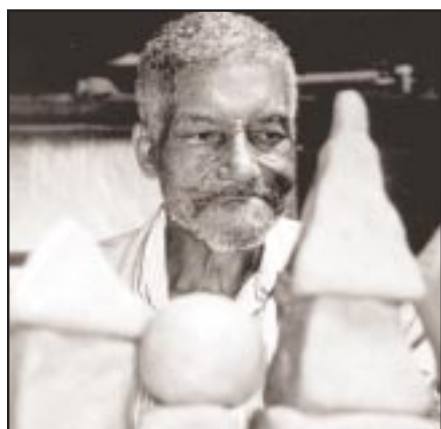
Esta rosa-dos-ventos de 16 pontas é uma das "estrelas" ilustradas por Fernando Diniz em seu filme.
© Fernando Diniz.

determinada de conquistar Violeta. Para isto mergulhou nos estudos por longos anos, tentando tornar-se um rico engenheiro.

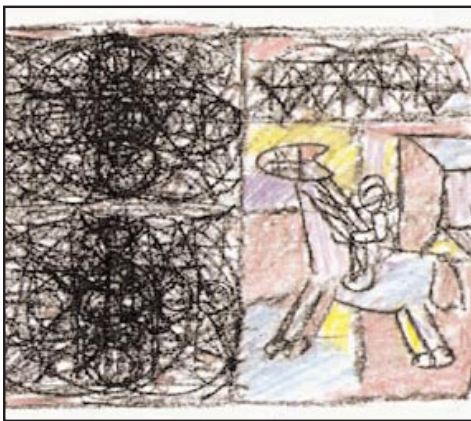
Um dia, já homem feito, Fernando descobriu que sua amada estava comprometida com

outro rapaz, branco e rico. A desilusão o fez abandonar os estudos e se trancar incomunicável. Seu alívio eram os banhos de mar que tomava, solitário, na praia de Copacabana. Até que, num domingo de sol, Fernando não percebeu as outras pessoas na praia escandalizando-se por ele estar completamente... nu! A polícia foi chamada e Fernando reagiu quando o quiseram levar preso. Foi levado então para um manicômio, e sua vida fora dos muros terminou aí. Classificado como louco, foi isolado de sua família e tratado com drogas e eletrochoques, como usual na época.

O que tornou a história de Fernando diferente da de tantos outros doentes mentais crônicos foi o encontro com uma pessoa muito especial: Dra. Nise da Silveira. Admiradora das idéias de Jung, e convencida de que os tratamentos convencionais para doentes mentais eram desumanos e ineficientes, a Dra. Nise revolucionou um tradicional hospital público ao criar ateliers de artes plásticas. Em 1952, fundou o Museu de Imagens do



Fernando Diniz. Foto by Claudia Bolshaw.



Neste desenho de um cavaleiro pode-se notar a tendência geométrica a que Fernando Diniz recorre para reorganizar o seu estado emocional quando se sente deprimido. © Fernando Diniz.

Inconsciente, em cujas oficinas os internos materializavam suas impressões e sentimentos em telas, desenhos e esculturas. O Museu floresceu como um fenômeno para a arte e a ciência. Os resultados das oficinas permitiam à equipe da Dra. Nise desvendar com clareza surpreendente os processos mentais de pessoas com pouca ou nenhuma expressão verbal. Ao encontrar o calado e retraído Fernando, a Dra. Nise convidou-o a frequentar os ateliers. Fernando reencontrou lá a sua *escola* e nela mergulhou de corpo e alma. Anos mais tarde, ele diria: “mudei para o mundo das imagens”.

Embora não fosse propósito da doutora avaliar a qualidade artística dos trabalhos, os críticos de arte conferiram a Fernando e alguns de seus colegas o status de artistas geniais. A reputação do Museu, após décadas de bem sucedidas experiências, atraiu a atenção do cineasta Leon Hirzman, que realizou em 1986 um documentário de longa-metragem chamado “Imagens do Inconsciente”. A vida e a obra de Fernando Diniz foram retratadas, e seu contato com a equipe de filmagem despertou nele uma obsessão: fazer cinema. Como não possuía câmera nem filme, Fer-

nando passou a desenhar fotogramas, um após o outro. Às vezes eram feitos separadamente num mesmo desenho, à maneira de um “storyboard”. Outras vezes ele pintava a óleo ou pastel em inúmeras camadas, criando um “fotograma” escondido sob o outro, num “filme” que só ele assistia.

Quando encontrei Fernando pela primeira vez, em 1988, ele trabalhava nestas séries de desenhos. A equipe do Museu queria registrá-los em filme e fui convidado a avaliar a possibilidade de documentar este trabalho com uma câmera de animação.

Ao ver os desenhos de Fernando Diniz, percebi estar diante do trabalho de um animador. Belos “lay-outs” de animações, uns abstratos e geométricos, outros com motivos figurativos, todos com alta qualidade plástica e excelente domínio de cores e formas.

Fernando me encantou também por sua atitude: foi muito difícil entender o que dizia, pois ele não tinha nem um dente na boca, mas mantinha um olhar curioso e um permanente bom-humor, sempre tentando explicar seu trabalho e aprender coisas novas.

Minha experiência como professor de animação indicava um “aluno” muito especial, apesar das dificuldades de comunicação. Fernando me convenceu da sua capacidade em dirigir ele mesmo seu processo de criação. Naquele mesmo dia decidi me empenhar em ajudá-lo a realizar suas animações em filme, iniciando um projeto que duraria cerca de seis anos até completar *Estrela de Oito Pontas*.

O primeiro passo foi dar a ele uma mesa de luz, e explicar-lhe que a partir de então teria que fazer os desenhos em folhas separadas e furadas. Arranjei também pontas de

filme e o empréstimo da câmera de animação 16mm do estúdio de animação da Funarte.

Fernando me entregou suas primeiras cenas após poucas semanas. Ele preenchera totalmente, com desenhos cheios de cor, as mil folhas que lhe entregara. Apesar de entender a função da mesa de luz e dos registros, Fernando não usara nem um, nem outro. Mas ao “flipar” a animação vi que ela funcionava muito bem. Ele preferia usar apenas sua memória visual como meio de registro, tomando as margens do papel como referência. Apesar da minha insistência, raramente utilizou pinos ou transparências até o final do processo.

Toda quarta-feira encontrava-me com Fernando para examinar suas novas cenas (500 desenhos por semana) e prepará-las para a filmagem. As cenas costumavam ter temas bem definidos, e eu incentivava Fernando a criar títulos para elas.

Algumas eram bem fáceis de entender, como uma série de animais ou pessoas praticando esportes. Outras eram riscos geométricos incompreensíveis, às vezes escurecendo completamente o papel.

Segundo a observação da Dra. Nise, estas variações traduziam o seu estado psíquico: em períodos de depressão, ele recorreria a imagens geométricas como uma forma de reorganizar seu estado emocional. Sentindo-se seguro e cercado de afeto, Fernando faria desenhos mais orgânicos. Comprovamos isto várias vezes, principalmente na última sequência do filme: a cavalgada de um personagem por um longo cenário.

Esta cena foi toda feita em uma mesa de animação dos estúdios da Funarte, e durante o trabalho Fernando estava sempre



Um cavalo de cor diferente. Quando ele se sente seguro e rodeado por pessoas queridas, Fernando desenha com um estilo mais figurativo, como por exemplo, esta imagem de uma pessoa montada em um cavalo que corre. © Fernando Diniz.

acompanhado e conversando animadamente enquanto desenhava. Foi a única cena em que ele usou os pinos profissionais de registro e a mesa de luz, e a cena tem elementos autobiográficos, com paisagens e personagens presentes em fases anteriores de sua pintura.

Costumávamos conversar longamente sobre os desenhos. Ele criara um sistema próprio de classificar as formas geométricas, e explicava isto em sua linguagem confusa. Cusnei a perceber que quando ele falava de abacaxi, peixe, pão, melancia, etc. estava se referindo à forma destes objetos e não ao seu significado real.

Um dia ele me trouxe uma cena que insistia em chamar de “a garrafa”. Olhando os desenhos um por um achei que ele havia se enganado, pois não conseguia identificar garrafa nenhuma. Como ele insistia no título, filmei a cena assim mesmo. Quando projetamos o copião fiquei surpreso ao perceber finalmente, vibrando por entre vários rabiscos, a silhueta de uma garrafa. Desde este dia ficou claro que Fernando tinha intenções definidas e conseguia dominar a

técnica para exprimi-las.

Fernando não demonstrava muita surpresa ao ver os copiões. Sentado sempre na primeira fila, às vezes ficava mais interessado em estudar o rápido piscar dos números luminosos de um contador de pés sob a tela. Percebi que ele tinha uma forte miopia, mas se recusava a usar óculos. Era como se já tivesse visto o suficiente ao fazer os desenhos, não se importando por não poder rever suas ani-

mações com nitidez. Mas ele adorava comentar e discutir o significado de tudo o que havia produzido, e sobretudo receber palmas e elogios por seu trabalho.

O título do filme vem do tema preferido de Fernando Diniz. Claudia Bolshaw, designer que estudava o trabalho de Fernando e assumiu a produção do curta nos últimos dois anos, escreveu uma tese de mestrado na qual decifra o significado da *Estrela de Oito Pontas*. A Estrela, para Fernando, é um sistema gráfico que organiza o espaço, e de onde nascem todas as suas figuras. A estrela de oito pontas é representada por uma cruz e duas diagonais, como a bandeira da Inglaterra. Quase sempre Fernando começa a desenhar traçando estas linhas básicas. São elas que o guiam para manter a proporção e o registro dos movimentos e formas que brotam de sua animação. Em quase todas as cenas do filme podem-se ver as linhas da “estrela” definindo o espaço. A Estrela é a salvação de Fernando, o sistema que lhe proporciona domínio e segurança. Graças às suas explorações pela arte, Fernando não pre-

cisa tomar nenhuma medicação psíquica há décadas. Ele tem uma vida produtiva e integrada à comunidade, e só continua vivendo dentro do hospital por não ter mais família ou alguém que possa cuidar de sua vida cotidiana.

O sucesso de *Estrela de Oito Pontas* no Brasil trouxe uma renovação do interesse pela obra de Fernando Diniz e pela questão do direito de pessoas de diferentes estados mentais a participar de nossa sociedade. Fernando continua vivendo em um hospital, pintando quadros e preparando cenas para outros filmes de animação. Fernando também toca música, no piano e na gaita harmônica, e algumas composições suas foram incorporadas à trilha musical do filme. A venda de cópias em vídeo de *Estrela de Oito Pontas* contribui para as suas despesas pessoais de manutenção no hospital.

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Nota: Os leitores podem contactar qualquer contribuidor da *Animation World Magazine* enviando e-mail ao editor@awn.com.

Animated Films In Psychiatry

by Nag Ansorge

The Psychiatric Clinic of the University of Lausanne Cery Hospital, 1962-1981

In 1962, I had just finished filming a documentary about the new buildings of the Cery Psychiatric Hospital near Lausanne, Switzerland when I suggested to Professor Muller the idea of acquiring a 16mm camera for his patients.

"What could you do with a camera and some patients?" he asked me. A little infatuated with the idea, I said, "I'm going to try to do something... The experiment interests me. How will I introduce myself to a group of patients that I don't know at all?" However, I have to say that after the first 30 seconds, my infatuation was satisfied. I asked the first group of patients, "Do you have anything to say or show by means of a camera?" There was hardly a moment of silence. They all suddenly said, "Yes, there's something to say." My experiment lasted 19 years. Thirteen films were made, from 10 to 20 minutes in length, eight of which were animated.

Creating a Team

In the beginning, one thought they would have filmed flowers, family scenes, memories, but they didn't go in that direction at all. Rather they wanted to produce an expressive film in live-action. Above all, they wanted to create in animation. An animation stand was built by a patient who



Nag Ansorge

had been a carpenter. The preferred animation technique was paper cut-outs. The technique allowed them to share the work as a group. The close collaboration among the participants gave each one a feeling of responsibility about the finished work. Each was driven to establish tight rapport with the others. It wasn't possible to do something alone or isolated within the framework of the group, nor could anyone keep aloof.

From the very first film it was proven that filmmaking was an excellent therapeutic means to encourage patients who had difficulty relating to others to come out of their shells and collaborate. The group:

- discussed the script
- chose a script that could be made by the group
- made character drawings, details and backgrounds
- cut out the drawings

- shot the animation beneath the camera frame by frame
- lit the set to be shot with the camera frame by frame
- edited the film and prepared the soundtrack
- eventually wrote a text and recorded it

Producing Independently

In order for the films to yield authentic results, it is necessary for the group to work in a perfectly independent fashion. They shouldn't feel that they are being observed, that is to say, that they are being the subjects of an experiment or a test for the doctors. In fact, we established from the beginning that any time a doctor or a nurse was present at one of the sessions, the patients showed a stagnation and an absence of spontaneity in their work. As a result, Professor Muller decided to let the group work in a completely autonomous manner. Consequently anything could be said among the filmmaking group without the doctors or caretakers being informed.

"What could you do with a camera and some patients?" he asked me.

Obviously, my presence also risked being resented as a disturbing foreign body, but the fact that I belonged neither to the medical nor the caretaking staff made things easier for me. The patients had to feel

at ease around me. I had to be present and available at the same time that I was invisible. I could give all the technical advice they wanted, but I was strictly forbidden to get involved with or offer criticism about the form or content of the film. The members of the group filmed and critiqued the results themselves. If they weren't satisfied, they started working all over again.

Hundreds of pages from illustrated magazines were selected and cut out in order to make the collages for the backgrounds.

This was the only way that these films could give an authentic reflection of the experiences that the patients had lived through. It was also a means of maintaining enthusiasm over the long time period required to complete a film. The production of an animation film required about a year, with a group of seven or eight patients working one morning a week. Of course the duration of participation by various patients varied, and new patients would soon take up where someone else had left off. The participation of the patients was completely voluntary. They came to work because they liked it, I think, and if they left, it was because something bothered them. Maybe it was a certain opposition, be it to the group or to the mode of working, or to the script... That's normal and that's how it goes!

The First Film

Using a few live-action shots, *The Poet And The Unicorn* (1963) was the first animation film done. It

is the story of a poet who wants to be free of his dreams. The script was written by one of the members of the group, who also played a character. The other members of the group made sketches to develop the main character. Hundreds

of pages from illustrated magazines were selected and cut out in order to make the collages for the backgrounds. The patients used this collage technique because of its simplicity and the good results that it gave in projection.

The members of the group realized very quickly that every person is able to make a valuable contribution, without necessarily possessing any particular artistic gifts. Therefore, everyone drew, painted, cut out or glued. Then they would move the figures in minute increments beneath the animation camera, filming one frame after another, revealing a certain patience for the work. If the weather permitted, the group could also shoot footage outdoors. Sometimes members of the hospital personnel might play bit parts. A horse was loaned to one production by a neighboring farmer, and once a group of messenger pigeons were released for a particular shot. Everyone watched the rushes and carefully judged the quality of each scene, and some



The four images below are from the group's first film, *The Poet And The Unicorn* (1963). Images courtesy of Nag Film.

would be done over again if necessary. The critical discussion reinforced the feelings of interdependence and homogeneity of the group. Everyone could participate in the discussion and speak his personal opinion, but in the end all accepted the majority decision.

The soundtrack, recorded by the group, was mixed in my studio, quite according to their instructions. This film, finished in 1963, was shown in hospitals to doctors and students, and in 1965 it received the "Minerva" award at the International Medical-Scientific Film Festival. This success was a happy encouragement to everyone. The film ran 17 minutes.

Further Work

Good Day My Eye was a film made up of sketches that were each told by a different patient. Most of the members of the first group had left the hospital, so it took some time for the new arrivals to agree on a theme for the script. Finally they decided to present the daily life of a fictional patient, hospitalized and

cut off from the outside world. The preoccupations of each person, including their issues with the hospital and its staff, would find a place to be expressed here: the importance of food, relationships with visitors, experiences of isolation, delirious interpretations of the surroundings, feelings of ambivalence for the care giving personnel, etc. On a technical level, animation was mixed with live-action. The film runs 16 minutes.

The Seven Nights Of Siberia (1967) is also a film made up of sketches. While searching for an idea for the next film's script, the group started telling jokes they knew about "crazy people," just to pass the time. Suddenly a patient told a very funny story about a "nut case." Everyone laughed, but the man who told the joke cried, "You're laughing, but the person you're laughing about is me!"

These films should not arouse compassion, but rather an interest and a sense of active conscience in the face of the mystery of mental illness.

The others said, "O.K., we've found the idea. We're going to tell all the jokes like this about crazies, so the public will realize that behind each of these jokes is something true, something that really happened, and that we are the people that they're about!" This 13 minute film is not at all funny, it's very moving, because the emphasis isn't on the gag but on the real content.

Ten other films were made



Alchemia, the last film that Nag and Gisèle Ansorge made together. © Nag Film.

in this manner up until 1981. This experience might be compared to a rather similar work done at the same time by Rene Laloux (France) for a film titled *The Teeth Of The Monkey* (1960), but there, the drawings of mental patients were animated by professional animators without any participation by the patients. In 1997 Robert Studio in Brussels produced the film *A Christmas Like Any Other*, written, performed, animated and synchronized with music by mentally handicapped artists.

A Life Altering Experience

On a personal level, this activity was a revelation for me. Since I didn't represent any medical authority, my relationship with the patients gradually became very direct and friendly. The way in which the patients analyzed things and made judgments allowed me to learn to know myself better. I discovered a world profoundly human, which had to work with very great suffering, the intensity of

which is hard to imagine.

These films should not arouse compassion, but rather an interest and a sense of active conscience in the face of the mystery of mental illness. The discovery of this thrilling milieu has certainly greatly influenced the themes treated in the films *Gisèle*, *my wife*, and *I made*.

Translated from French by William Moritz.

A showcase of Nag and Gisèle Ansorge's work will soon be featured in AWN's Gallery. Please read the The Animation Flash Email Newsletter for a premiere date.

Nag Ansorge is a prestigious, ground breaking live-action and animation filmmaker from Switzerland.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Le Film d'Animation en Psychiatrie

par Nag Ansorge

Hôpital de Cery (Lausanne) - 1962 à 1981.

En 1962, le tournage d'un film documentaire sur les nouveaux bâtiments de la clinique psychiatrique Universitaire de Lausanne-Hôpital de Cery, que je venais de terminer, a donné l'idée au Professeur Müller d'acquérir une caméra 16mm à l'intention de ses malades. "Que peut-on faire avec une caméra et des patients?" m'a-t-il demandé. Un peu affolé, je lui ai dit : "Je vais essayer de faire quelque chose...l'expérience m'intéresse. Mais comment vais-je me présenter devant un groupe de patients que je ne connais pas du tout?" Je dois dire qu'après les trente premières secondes, mon affolement s'est apaisé. J'ai demandé au premier groupe de quatre patients : "Avez-vous quelque chose à dire ou à montrer au moyen d'une caméra?" Il n'y a pas eu un grand silence, ils ont tout de suite dit : "Oui, on a quelque chose à dire."

"Que peut-on faire avec une caméra et des patients?" m'a-t-il demandé.

L'expérience a duré 19 ans, 13 films d'une durée de 10 à 20 minutes ont été réalisés, dont 8 films d'animation.

Lancer une équipe

Au départ, on avait pensé qu'on filmerait des fleurs, des scènes de



Nag Ansorge

famille et de souvenir. Ce n'est pas du tout parti dans cette direction-là mais dans la direction d'un désir de produire un film d'expression, en prises de vue réelles et surtout en animation. Une table d'animation (banc-titre) fut construite par un patient menuisier. La technique d'animation privilégiée fut les papiers découpés. Cette technique permettait de répartir le travail dans le groupe. Cette coopération étroite entre les participants confère à chacun un sentiment de reponsabilité vis-à-vis du travail accompli. Chacun est poussé à établir des rapports étroits avec les autres. Il n'est pas possible d'agir isolément dans le cadre du groupe, ni de se tenir à l'écart. Dès le premier film, il s'est avéré que cette occupation était un excellent moyen thérapeutique pour inciter les patients, qui ont des difficultés de contact avec autrui à sortir d'eux-mêmes et à collaborer avec les autres:

- discussion en groupe des scénarios
- choix d'un scénario qui puisse être réalisé en groupe
- réalisation des dessins, personnages, détails et fonds
- découpages des dessins
- animation sous la caméra image par image
- éclairage et déclenchement de la caméra image par image
- montage du film et sonorisation
- éventuellement, écriture d'un texte et son enregistrement

Une production indépendante

Pour que de tels films puissent donner des résultats authentiques il faut que le groupe puisse travailler d'une manière parfaitement indépendante, qu'il ne se sente pas observé, c'est-à-dire qu'il ne constitue pas un objet d'expériences ou de tests pour les médecins. En effet on a pu constater dès le début qu'une stagnation et une absence de spontanéité dans le travail se produisaient toutes les fois que les médecins ou des infirmiers assistaient à des séances. C'est pourquoi le professeur Müller a décidé de laisser le groupe travailler de manière complètement autonome. En conséquence, tout peut être dit au sein du groupe cinématographique sans que les médecins ou le personnel soignant en soient informés.

Evidemment, ma présence risquait aussi d'être ressentie comme un corps étranger perturbateur. Le fait que je n'appartenais ni à l'équipe

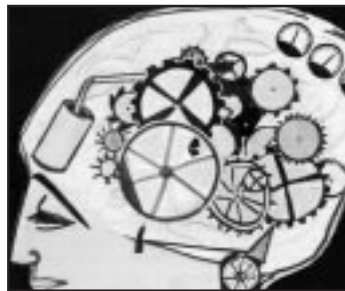
soignante, ni au personnel non médical de la clinique facilitait bien les choses. Il fallait que les patients se sentent libres à mon égard. Je devais être présent et disponible tout en me faisant oublier. Donner tous les conseils techniques voulus mais, en ce qui concernait la forme et le fond, m'interdire toute intervention ou toute remarque critique. Les membres du groupe filment et critiquent eux-mêmes les résultats. S'ils ne sont pas satisfaits, ils recommencent leur travail.

Ainsi seulement ces films peuvent donner un reflet authentique d'expériences vécues. C'est également un moyen de maintenir l'enthousiasme, en dépit des longs travaux qu'exigent la réalisation d'un film complet.

La production d'un film d'animation se répartit sur une année à raison d'une matinée par semaine avec un groupe de 7 à 8 patients. Bien entendu, la durée de participation des patients peut varier et de nouveaux patients reprennent la réalisation en cours. La participation des patients est libre: s'ils viennent, je pense que c'est parce qu'ils s'y plaisent, s'ils partent, c'est parce que quelque chose les gêne. Il peut y avoir une certaine opposition, soit au groupe, soit à la façon de travailler, ou au scénario. C'est normal, ça, c'est la vie!

Le premier film

Dans *Le Poète et la Licorne* (1963) (17 minutes), premier film, l'animation est mélangée aux prises de vues directes. C'est l'histoire d'un poète qui veut se libérer de ses rêves. Le



Images du *Poète et la Licorne*, premier film réalisé par le groupe de patients en 1963. © Nag Ansoorge.

scénario est écrit par un des membres du groupe, qui joue également son personnage; les autres membres font des esquisses pour trouver le personnage principal. Des centaines de pages de journaux illustrés sont triées, découpées afin de servir de matériel pour les collages prévus comme arrière-plans du dessin animé (les fonds). Cette technique de collage obtient les suffrages des patients en raison de sa simplicité et des bons résultats qu'ils donnent à la projection. Les membres du groupe s'aperçoivent très rapidement que chacun est capable de fournir une participation valable, sans qu'il soit nécessaire de posséder des dons artistiques particuliers. Ainsi tout le monde dessine, peint, découpe ou colle, puis on déplace minutieusement les figurines sous la caméra d'animation en filmant image après image, en se relayant pour ce travail de patience. Si les conditions météorologiques s'y prêtent, le groupe opère parallèlement les prises de vue extérieures. Des rôles accessoires sont tenus parfois par des membres du personnel de l'hôpital. Un cheval est mis à disposition par le fermier

du site, des pigeons voyageurs sont lâchés.

Le visionnement des séquences permet de juger de leur qualité et sont refaites le cas échéant. La discussion critique renforce le sentiment d'interdépendance et par là l'homogénéité du groupe: chacun peut participer au débat et donner son avis personnel pour se rallier finalement à la décision prise par la majorité. La sonorisation

au moyen d'enregistrements réalisés par le groupe a été effectuée dans mon studio, mais selon des indications proposées.

Terminé en 1963, ce film est diffusé dans les milieux spécialisés médicaux et étudiants et recoit en 1965 la "Minerve" au Festival international du film médico-scientifique à Turin. Ce succès fut un encouragement réjouissant pour tous.

Des centaines de pages de journaux illustrés sont triées, découpées afin de servir de matériel pour les collages prévus comme arrière-plans du dessin animé.

D'autres créations

Bonjour Mon Oeil (1965) (16 min) est un film où tous les sketches sont racontés par des patients différents. La plupart des membres du premier groupe ayant quitté l'hôpital il faut du temps aux nouveaux arrivants pour tomber d'accord sur un thème de scénario. Pour finir, on décide de représenter la vie quotidienne

d'une patiente fictive, hospitalisée et coupée du monde extérieur. Les préoccupations de chacun, y compris ses revendications vont y trouver leur expression: importance de la nourriture, relation avec les visiteurs, expérience de l'isolement, interprétation délirante de l'entourage, sentiments pleins d'ambivalence éprouvés à l'égard du personnel soignant. Sur le plan technique l'animation se mêle aux prises de vue réelles.

Les Sept Nuits De Sibirie (1967) (13 min) est aussi un film à sketches. En cherchant l'idée d'un scénario pour le film suivant, les participants se mettent à raconter des blagues sur les "fous," simplement pour passer le temps. Tout à coup un patient raconte une histoire de "fous" très drôle. Tout le monde ri et il s'écrie : "Vous riez, mais le personnage dont vous riez, c'est moi!" Les autres alors ont déclaré : "Voilà on a trouvé l'idée : on va raconter des histoires de ce genre de telle façon que le public se rende compte que derrière ces histoires de moquerie il y a quelque chose de vrai, de vécu et que c'est nous!" Ce film n'est pas du tout drôle, il est émouvant, car l'accent n'est pas porté sur le gag mais sur le contenu vrai. Dix autres films ont été réalisés de cette manière jusqu'en 1981.

Cette expérience peut être comparée à un travail assez proche mené à la même époque par René Laloux (France) pour un film intitulé *Les Dents Du Singe* (1960), mais les dessins des patients étaient animés par des animateurs professionnels sans l'intervention de leurs auteurs.



Alchemia, le dernier film de Nag and Gisèle Ansgore. © Nag Ansgore.

En 1997 le studio Robert de Bruxelles vient de sortir le film *Un Noël Pas Comme Les Autres* écrit, interprété, animé mis en musique par des artistes handicapés mentaux.

Ces films ne doivent pas susciter de la compassion, mais un intérêt et une prise de conscience active face au mystère de la maladie mentale.

Une révélation

Sur le plan personnel, cette activité a été une révélation pour moi. Ne représentant aucune autorité médicale, les relations se créent peu à peu d'une manière très directe, amicale. La façon dont les patients s'analysent, jugent et analysent aussi les autres m'a permis d'apprendre à me connaître moi-même. J'ai pu découvrir un monde profondément humain qui doit faire face à de très grandes souffrances, dont on a certainement beaucoup de peine à imaginer l'intensité.

Ces films ne doivent pas susciter de la compassion, mais un intérêt et une prise de conscience active face au mystère de la maladie mentale. La découverte de ce milieu passionnant a certainement beaucoup influencé les thèmes traités dans nos films réalisés avec Gisèle.

L'oeuvre de Nag et Gisèle Ansgore sera prochainement présentée dans la Galerie virtuelle d'Animation World Network. La date d'ouverture sera annoncée dans notre Flash Newsletter hebdomadaire.

Nag Ansgore est un réalisateur suisse de films en vue réelle et en animation. Nag a été un pionnier dans l'utilisation du sable dans des films d'animation.

Note: Les lecteurs peuvent contacter les collaborateurs d'Animation World Magazine en envoyant un e-mail à editor@awn.com.

Animating Under the Camera

compiled by Heather Kenyon

We asked leading artists who work with two of the most popular and striking under the camera animation techniques, sand, and other loose materials, and paint on glass, to reveal different tips and tricks that they have learned through trial and error. We hope that they will encourage you to experiment in these areas as well as other under the camera animation techniques. All of these artists attest that what makes these techniques so difficult is what makes them so appealing — that fleeting sense of spontaneity of creating an image, only to replace it with the next, destroying while creating.

Go for the weakest light possible behind your artwork whenever working with underlit images. - Caroline Leaf

On the subject of sand, we hear from Caroline Leaf, Maria Procházková, Eli Noyes and Gerald Conn, and for paint on glass, we hear from Alexander Petrov, Wendy

Tilby, Eleanor "Ellen" Ramos and Lyudmila Koshkina.

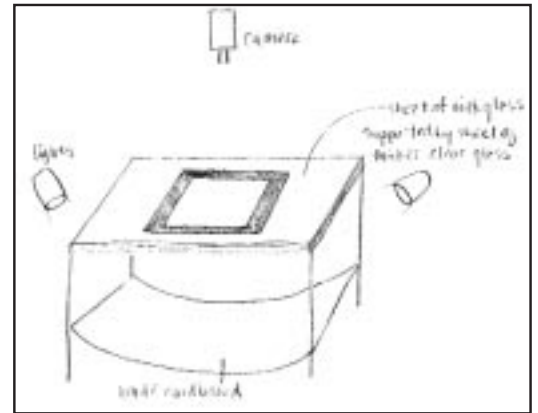
Sand

Caroline Leaf

I worked with white beach sand poured out onto an underlit piece of glass in a darkened room. The only light in the room came from the lights under the sand animation, letting the sand become a black silhouette against a white ground. Even though it was very fine sand, I needed a large field size to make detailed sand images. The field was approximately 24 x 18 inches. The best way to light such a large surface evenly turned out to be with a light on either side of the table pointing down to the floor and bouncing back up to the underside of my working surface from a large curved piece of white cardboard lying directly below on the floor. An important side benefit of this indirect lighting is that you are not looking directly into a light bulb while you work. This can strain your eyes, not only because of the brightness,

but because the eye struggles to accommodate the big contrast between light and dark. Go for the weakest light possible behind your artwork whenever working with underlit images.

When I am



This sketch by Caroline Leaf illustrates her recommended set-up for sand animation. © Caroline Leaf.

setting up for sand animation, I always look for glass, not plexiglass, on which to work. With friction and rubbing, plexiglass builds up static electricity, which makes the grains of sand jump around in a frustratingly independent way, particularly in dry climates like Montreal in the winter. The best glass I have found, though rare and expensive, is called flashed opal or milk glass. It is window thickness clear glass with one side of very thin white glass. It is often sold by large glass manufacturers supplying photography stores. Choose a piece of glass without bubbles in the white flashing and have the white side up when you work to avoid problems with reflections within the glass.

Maria Procházková

Stopač/Footprints

When I decided to realize an animated film on such a simple, matter-of-fact subject as traces, footprints, human touches and their passing character, I became perfectly aware of the fact that this film



Caroline Leaf, often referred to as a pioneer of sand animation, is shown here working on her first sand film, *The Owl Who Married a Goose*. Photos courtesy of Caroline Leaf



could not be a drawn one, and that the chosen animation technique should express the basic idea that I was trying to share – a passing, transitory feeling, the feeling of the impossibility to preserve something. Within the small scale of this film, I hesitated between sugar and flour, but finally opted for sand, due to its beautiful color. Also, it does not imitate soil. On the contrary, it may be fixed for some period of time with water. For me, the sand was a very good material with which to work. I used a layer of about six centimeters thick in which I imprinted with small molds (printers). I sprayed the sand in short intervals with water so that its quality of looseness did not change, and simultaneously, in order to prevent the sand from turning more pale. I was careful not to get it darker due to excessive watering. The sand turned dry very quickly under the powerful film lights. I sometimes had to pour in water even during the individual shots, which constituted a big risk of moving the footprints already marked. I used a dense sieve for the sand used in close-ups so that this sand did not seem coarser than the sand in the whole-shots. The aspect that I enjoyed most in this project was that everything was appearing directly under the camera and in

the same way, was disappearing in subsequent shots, in order to give way to the creation of something new.

Eli Noyes

The sand animation I did was back in the mid '70's when I made a short film from experiments I did under the animation stand I kept in my loft in New York. The experiments turned into a short film called *Sandman*. Then I convinced the Children's Television Workshop to let me make the entire alphabet, upper case turning into lower case letters, using sand animation and the little characters I invented when I did *Sandman*.

I prefer manipulating materials directly underneath the camera as I find this working method leaves room for greater spontaneity. - Gerald Conn

Tricks and tips? First I got my sand from an aquarium supply store. It came only in white so I sprayed it black so it would show up. Then I made a little sandbox out of strips of wood on a big piece of glass underlit with a light box. I experimented with all kinds of brushes, little squeegees, tools to manipulate clay with, etc. I found a medium stiff paintbrush the best tool for pushing the sand around to make my characters. The most useful tool was a simple invention made from a mayonnaise jar and some tubing from the fish store. One tube pierced the cover of the mayonnaise jar and went to the bottom of

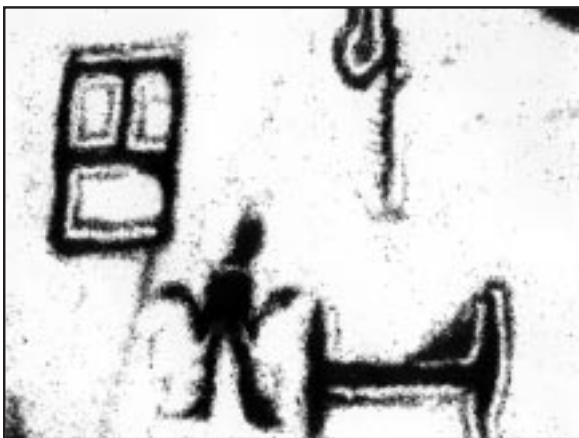
the jar. The other only went in an inch or so and had a sort of filter taped over it made from lens tissue. Sucking on the short one would allow me to use the longer one as a vacuum cleaner to pick up pieces of sand that couldn't be brushed away. That helped a lot when I wanted to make clean lines, or put white holes in dark shapes.

The most important thing for me was and still is to let the material I am working in speak to me and help me derive an aesthetic particular to it. The sand naturally makes certain shapes when you push it around. It tends to leave trails which can be of use if you don't try to fight them. I would say that a big dose of this philosophy would be a very useful cheat and tip for anyone wanting to work in sand. Experiment, and experiment to find your design.

Gerald Conn

I have been using sand in my animated films for about ten years. I prefer manipulating materials directly underneath the camera as I find this working method leaves room for greater spontaneity. To me the process seems similar to modeling forms in clay, where you are constantly adjusting and thereby improving on the image as you go along. I storyboard my films quite carefully and usually bar-chart the animation to music as this gives me a structure with which to work.

For me sand animation seems particularly suited to certain subject matter. I don't use many figures in my films but I like dealing with topics that involve animals and natural phenomena. I also like to include tracking and zooming shots in my films for dramatic effect. These shots have a particular quality in this technique because you are creating the imagery as you animate rather than it being a purely



Sandman. © Eli Noyes.

mechanical camera-move. I often use inks on a second layer of glass in order to combine color with the sand animation. It's difficult to do anything detailed in this way but I find that it gives the animation an extra dimension.

I would say the most important tip when working with sand is to use a thin layer of the material on the glass. This enables you to control the tonal quality of the image, which in turn will give the animation a greater sense of form. I personally prefer to work with a fairly coarse grade of beach sand. This gives the animation a grainy look that I like.



Gerald Conn at work in his studio. Courtesy of and © Gerald Conn

details of the subject, and making transformations during the filming process.

I stick to a very strict art direction, and with my storyboard, I know where I need to arrive, but how can I get there? What will be the next scene? Every time, it's a surprise, good or bad. For example, in the film, *Dream of a Ridiculous Man*, there is, at the end of the film, this episode with the hero observing Hell. He looks down and sees a little man in his hands. When I was filming this scene, I didn't like the final, and the skin color of the little man bothered me. So, I decided to change the color of the skin for a white sculpture skin. With this changing, the little man, made of sand, could kill himself. The clay was falling through the hands of the hero, and leaving a sense of destruction. I found this symbol at the end of the film! That's what I like with this technique of painting on glass — I can improvise with the subject.

I also prefer working with real people. In the film *The Cow*, I chose my son Dimitri for the role of the child. For *Dream of a Ridiculous*

Man, the hero was my camera man Sergei Rechetnikov and in *The Mermaid*, I used some people from my neighborhood and again, my son Dimitri. It's essential to work with references because my work is realistic and I try to keep the real personalities in my characters. It is wonderful to paint people that I love.

When I'm doing an animation film, just like painting a picture,

I let out my energy and my feelings in the colors. With the animation, I'm searching to express ideas, but I also try to find the harmony of life. This harmony I can find during the filming process with mistakes and successes. Step by step, I try to project the beauty, the force and emotions within the animated image.

Wendy Tilby

Here are my "paint on glass tips 'n' tricks" (which I have not necessarily followed):

1. Preserve your health and well-being by using non-toxic, non-smelly water-based paint such as Pelikan gouache mixed with glycerin.

2. Limit your palette. Too many col-



The Mermaid. © Alexander Petrov.

This animation technique gives me wonderful opportunities for variations on a subject. - Alexander Petrov

Paint On Glass

Alexander Petrov

In animation film, painting on glass is like painting on a canvas. My work deals with subjects like portraits, landscapes, and historical events in a realistic style. Painting on canvas is creating an idea with one subject. Animated films allow the possibility of finding multiple ideas; therefore, the themes grow larger, more detailed, and are more dynamic than paintings on canvas. This animation technique gives me wonderful opportunities for variations on a subject. I prefer working with living ideas, changing the

ors quickly turn to *mud!*

3. Top or bottom? Top lighting will give your colors more brilliance while bottom lighting will mute them. Ask yourself if you would prefer to spend countless hours in a dark room under hot lights or countless hours in a dark room staring at a light table. If you choose bottom light, I would recommend color-balanced, non-flickering fluorescent tubes. Incandescent bulbs are too hot.

4. Use milky plexi-glass or opal glass.

5. Add and subtract paint with brushes, fingers, Q-tips (cotton buds), small sticks, strong tissue. Textures can be created with sponges, lace or rubber gloves with patterned grips.

6. Small field sizes (i.e. 5 to 7) are more manageable than big ones unless you are moving only parts of a larger tableau.

7. Paint on glass is very forgiving. In other words, if where you start and where you are going is clear, you can get away with a lot of fudging in between.

8. Don't treat each frame as though it's your last.

9. Never destroy your last frame until you've sketched in the next.

10. Paint on glass is ideal for metamorphosing, animated scene transitions, dream sequences and fish.

Eleanor "Ellen" Ramos

The Other Side of the Volcano is my very first attempt to animate by painting on glass. I cringe every time it is shown on the big screen. I cannot stop seeing every single frame and every single mistake I made. It was a totally risky adventure for me, one full of discoveries achieved through much pain and frustration.

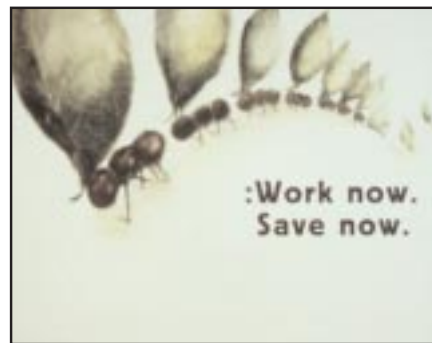
I only stumbled upon the idea of using this technique when I read about Caroline Leaf's *The*

Street. I was completely intrigued and immediately decided that I had to try it. It was only after I'd finished my piece that I had the opportunity to see one of her films, or any paint-on-glass animation for that matter. When I started working on my film, all I knew was how painstaking it would be and that I would need a lot of self-discipline, endurance and concentration, as well as an assistant who would tell me if I'd forgotten to click the camera.

First priority for me, was physical comfort. Aside from having a bed close by, I designed my own animation table so that my assistant Annabel and I could work face to face, comfortably sitting down, and with the trigger of the second-hand Bolex camera not too high for our fingers to reach. I decided to use a 10mm lens so that I could work with a 7 x 9 field in two levels. I had to content myself with only 6 inches to separate the two levels of glass, which sadly did not give me a chance to play with illusions of depth. I could also slide the upper glass to the side if I wanted to work on the lower glass.

Paint on glass is ideal for metamorphosing, animated scene transitions, dream sequences and fish. - Wendy Tilby

I did some tests with inks, water-based paints and oil paint mixed with linseed oil. The tropical heat of the Philippines, however, is just so strong that aside from making me easily tired, almost every paint I tried dried much too quickly, except for the oil paint. Along the way, it became much easier for me to use it pure. To keep the paint wet as long as possible, I decided to use



Wendy Tilby used paint on glass for this Acme Filmworks commercial.

fluorescent lights for bottom lighting with a minus green correction filter. A wonderful side effect was that it made the room temperature quite bearable as well, since I couldn't afford an air conditioned room. Except for short coffee breaks, I had to work continuously to finish a scene or get to a point where I could make a quick transition. Otherwise, the paint dried and the scene would become dirty as I reworked it. I would really appreciate it if someone could share with me *their* secret of keeping the paint wet as long as possible because scraping off dry oil paint takes a lot of energy!

Although I made a storyboard, how the next scene would work was decided along the way. Sometimes, one second of transition would take me one entire day to accomplish. If I was hungry or not in the best of moods, the transitions became awkward and less imaginative.

My fingers, and the pointed edge of a nail file for scratching in lines, were the only tools I used. Sometimes, I used cardboard stencils for keeping the shapes and sizes of the figures consistent as they moved within the frame. I loved the texture of the oil paint made by my fingers and how the colors piled up and glowed with the brilliance that can only be achieved when lighting from below.

My producer Avic, Annabel and I labored over the film for more than seven months. Those who have seen *The Other Side of the Volcano* in international animation festivals say that it reminds them of “batik” art. I’m happy that even with its crudeness and imperfections, it somehow came out with an innate Asian look and feel. In making this film, I somehow felt a strong affinity with the Tibetan monks — laboring over intricate colorful patterns in the sand, only to cast them away to the wind.

Lyudmila Koshkina

I work in the paint animation technique. The technique has a conventional name but every artist animates his painting and paints right in front of the camera in his own way. That is why I’d like to put aside the particularities of my own creativity and tell you about the technology created as a result of such painting. I use various methods, which are sometimes called mixed techniques, however, my pictorial stylistics unite all of these methods.

Paints will dry quickly and be opaque (non-transparent), so I usually work with natural tempera or synthetic paints with analogical qualities.

The general method of this technique is to work directly under the camera: one layout, or in-between, is overlaid by a layer of paint, depicting the following layout. As I overlay paints, I sometimes pass on using a cel and work, for example, on cardboard. However, experience shows that using cels sometimes not only helps to save one pains, but also encourages the artist to feel more free in his creative work.

Actually, one person bears all difficulties in the creation of a car-

toon film made using such a method. The art-director-painter has to be an actor, because how the characters mimic emotions is a very important aspect and depends on the ingenuity of the painting, i.e. to be real psychological acting.

In addition to painting under the camera I use previously prepared in-betweens on cels and flat-figures (cut-outs). Plus, I also use the cel as glass.

It is very convenient to use previously prepared layouts when a character actively moves the shot, on pans or when wonderful or unique scenery (backgrounds) cannot be repainted with each character move. The prepared layouts (in-betweens) can also be used when a shot is to be used two or more times. Such in-betweens differ from regular in-betweens of a cartoon film because the paint is put on the face (obverse) side of the cel and is worked over there - i.e. the cel is used as a canvas, on which the artist draws a picture and works with it in the same way as a painter works with a fragment of his painting.

Work with flat-figures (cut-outs) has its own peculiarities. Flat-figures can be cut-outs in the form of phases of full movement cut out from the cel, such as a walk or a dance. If a character walks through the frame, but not on the pan, then they can be used. The flat-figure can also work as it usually does, but the painter-animator can draw on the cel under the camera the necessary details, like a facial expression, pleats or folds of cloth or a hand movement.

Certainly, we can only dream about a script which is especially written for this technique, but the general approach can be defined as psychological and lyrical. The scale of the relationships of

the characters is different.

This technique is very good for close ups, which are very rarely used in animation. It is possible to make some elements less mobile. Assume that fairy or historical costumes with decorations, which are limited in movement but pleasant to look at, don’t decrease the historical veracity of a simple scheme by using this technique. It also ensures that they do not contradict the flat coloring of other elements.

The time crunch of film production does not allow for an opportunity to achieve the quality of a finished oil-painted painting in each shot, but the painter strives for perfection in his own style. Every shot is more deep because of texture and the great variety of hues and colors. However, it leads to certain peculiar features of rhythm because it is necessary to let the audience study each picture. This allows us to shoot three frames for each image. Eyes accept such frequency even in shots with a large range of movement.

By all means, such work itself can be regarded as a process, where one has to solve current creative and technical tasks on each shot. I have really described only the main characteristics and features of this animation technique. It is impossible to speak about all the niceties and secrets in such a short survey, besides, plot can dictate certain particularities when developing a film concept.

Heather Kenyon is Editor-in-Chief of Animation World Magazine

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The RealFlash Festival Winners

The RealFlash Animation Festival launched on December 10, 1997. More than 150 entries were received and 93 were accepted into the showcase. Of those, 15 professional and 15 non-professional made it into the finalist round, and were voted on by an international panel of judges which viewed the 30 different works on their computers, using the RealFlash plug-in. In addition, to the first and second place categorical awards voted on by the jury, the public was given an opportunity to vote, and their favorites were awarded RealChoice Awards.

The winners are as follows. Visit the RealFlash web site to view the winning clips and learn more about the artists and technology behind them.

Professional Category

First Place: *Momm!* by Julia Martin.
Second Place: *Reeling Around* by Robin Debreuil.
RealChoice: *RATS: The Beginning* by Jason Wood.

Non-Professional Category

First Place: *Crash* by Chris Lanier.
Second Place: *Devolution* by Karl Thulin.
RealChoice: *2B3D* by David Fedorko.

Inside Zagreb: The Preselection Process

by John R. Dilworth

It is a tremendous thrill to have your film invited to a film festival and seen by a large audience. After the struggle to complete your film, the struggle continues to get it into festivals. When I was invited to be part of the preselection committee for the 1998 Zagreb International Animation Film Festival, I eagerly accepted, anxious to uncover the mysteries behind the process of invitation.

Quality and artistic expression are top priorities.

I was very honored to be invited to participate in the selection of this year's program and I took the responsibility very seriously. Zagreb had a three person, multi-cultural jury consisting of myself, an American filmmaker, whose film, *The Dirty Birdy*, won the Audience Prize at Zagreb in 1996, a distributor from Germany via Hungary, Detelina Grigorova-Kreck, and a Croatian studio executive, Vedran Misletic. The hosting country of a festival will always have a native representative on the jury. The trio and a senior festival director will decide which of the 800 plus films will be presented in this year's festival.

The Basics

The process begins with a first night dinner hosted by the festival. Here the ground rules are laid out and the festival philosophy is expressed. Quality and artistic expression are top priorities. It is important for the directors of the

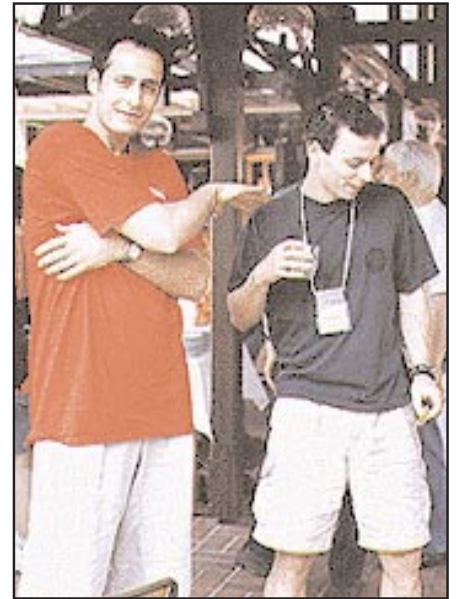
festival to "push young people to be creative, so that in 25 years they are not waiters." Another important issue is funding, as arts money continues to erode even in Zagreb, a town rich in its historical artistic significance to animation. One way the festival finances itself is by including commercials and television series categories. This insures advertising dollars from the submitting studios while avoiding becoming a market like Annecy.

For the next ten days the jurists will sit in a large dark room with three separate tables lit by small lamps. Twenty feet away is a large video projection screen and a large television set. The TV is for more accurate color. All entries are viewed on video. Each jurist is given several thick books containing specific details about each entry. At the bottom of each page are several boxes. One box is for comments and the other boxes are for voting. A '+' vote indicates the entry is in. A '-' means it's out and a '?' means it isn't bad, but it isn't good either. The jurist cannot decide. After 14 hours of watching films, all the '?' votes will be revisited and who knows which way it will go. The worst vote is the '?' with a big '-' next to it. It is as one jurist put it, "the kiss of death."

A film that is well done overall is indisputable.

Individual Influences

Many factors go into the voting process. The most inalienable



John Dilworth, left, with Niko Meulemans at Zagreb '96. Photo by Maureen Furniss.

factor is individual taste. A film that is well done overall is indisputable. Andrej Khrjanovsky's *The Long Journey* is an example of a film well done. Many others are not. The jurists may share similar likes and dislikes, but they will not like or dislike something for the same reasons. Thus, a three-person jury. An entry can only be approved if a majority agrees. If there is still a dispute the final decision rests with the organizing director, who has a strong opinion as well.

Films that are well done have a strong narrative, interesting characters and an overall arresting presentation. So many submissions do not pay enough attention to all the elements that go into making a film. For example, one entry might have a strong design but no story. Although each jurist favored traditional filmmaking as a standard, when an abstract or experimental

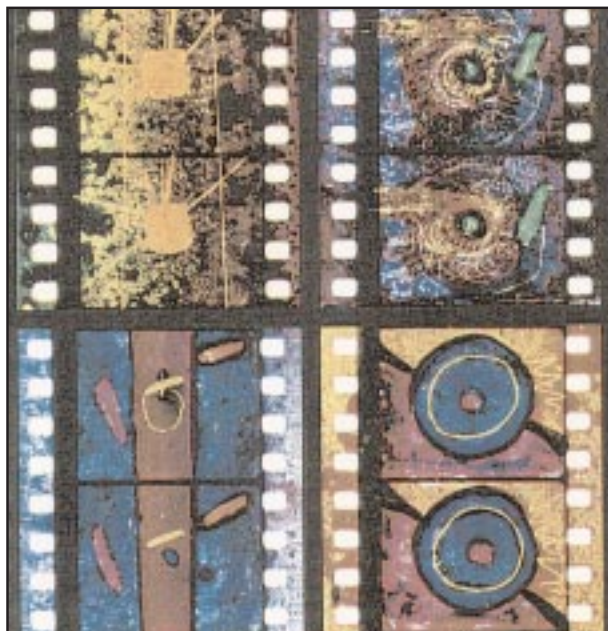
entry screened, the vote became even more of a personal decision. Yet, even in this category, a well envisioned and executed film stands out, like Richard Reeves' *Linear Dreams*.

Besides the jury members' personal points of view, there are many disadvantages filmmakers give themselves. For instance, there were many more applications submitted but the films never arrived. Some films were submitted in rough cut and some others without a track. It is truly impossible to judge submissions like these. Unfortunately, because of the amount of films and the limited time, one does not have much of a chance getting in with a half completed work unless the work is very good, as was the case with an entry by Paul Bush. Another disadvantage is not having subtitles or a translation. Only when a film is accepted does the festival provide subtitles. A film with unique pacing that relies heavily on dialogue or narration, but does not provide subtitles, will most likely be passed over.

Besides the jury members' personal points of view, there are many disadvantages filmmakers give themselves.

Explain Yourself!

The issue of taste is a mighty stone and pushing it up a mountain is what the voting process is like, only with the chance that the stone could roll back down and crush you. It is nearly impossible to exclude one's ego when deciding



In the abstract or experimental category, a well envisioned and executed film stands out, like Richard Reeves' *Linear Dreams*. Image courtesy of Richard Reeves.

which film is acceptable and which is not. It is part of the discipline to select as a group. Everyone must deal with the certain presumed imbalances of fellow jurors, like a lack of experience, limited contextual film knowledge, and inadequate exposure to less typical or common film vocabulary. Even at advanced levels of expertise, these issues exist, but to a much greater extent because no one likes to show off their warts.

It is a true struggle to remain objective and address the film itself without deferring to one's own level of subjectivity. It is very easy to become passionate about a film. If something is pleasing to you, congratulations, but now could you tell us why? Here is where all the fun is. The jury must explain their choices and defend their selections with something more influential than, 'Because I like it.' So we then become ever so genteel and polite and debate in English; the language of choice, because there are many more non-Americans who speak English than Americans who

speak anything else. It is tough enough to communicate in one's own native tongue, but to do so in another language is asking for compassion.

Parring Them Down

Not all films are viewed entirely. If a film is long the jury will watch a few minutes and have an immediate impression. Sometimes one jurist will cast a negative vote soon after the film begins and leave the room, or if a film inspires someone to call out, "I've seen enough", and the other jurors agree, the film will stop and we move on to the next entry. To keep everyone happy each jurist and the organizing director is permitted one unchallenged favorite.

At the end of each day the jury gathers and reviews their choices. An eye is kept on such topics as: the number of entries from each country, whether or not the popular films by name filmmakers are in, and which films go to competition versus which go to the panorama or noncompetitive screenings. The organizing directors work extremely hard. The details and considerations that go into molding the final festival form are numerous. Curating the programs is a last minute affair without knowing for certain which directors will attend. The festival doesn't want to have one program with all the visiting directors taking a bow, leaving the other programs without anyone to introduce.

The Student Category

The student films are judged as professionals. No special consideration is given to their young talents. The jury was hard on the student entries. There were over 250 submissions from schools around the world. The best came from Eng-



J.J. Sedelmaier's *Casablanca*, from his "TV Funhouse" segments for *Saturday Night Live*, caused "a serious debate" among preselection committee members. Image courtesy of J.J. Sedelmaier Productions.

land, a country determined to conquer the world through animation. The Royal College of Art is doing a very good job yielding young talent like John Colin's *The Hapless Child*. However, not all is encouraging. A large percentage of the student work failed miserably with storytelling, especially those using the computer in the creative production process. Most computer entries focused on what appeared to be exercises in fabric studies, lighting, texture mapping and modeling. I should think these young artists would do well to reconsider the art of storytelling, before trying to impress the world with the abilities of technology's latest software. Professors should take better care with guiding their impressionable pupils. Most East European schools do not have computers on which students can experiment. The work coming from these areas was more interesting than from the high-tech west, despite the higher tuitions!

Commercial Categories

Two other difficult groups to judge were TV series and commercials. The blur of watching so many TV series, mostly from Europe, as the bigger budgeted programming went to Annecy, was saddening. They were all so similar, as if the world TV community was collaborating to ruin the minds of children, selling a quality that will leave indelible psychological trauma for years to come. The jury watched over 30 hours of material in 2 hours. The stars of most of these productions had their personalities texture mapped on, so that when you peeled their skin back they were hollow. Among the best of the bunch was *Ted Sieger's Wild Life*, produced by Hahn Film Berlin.

The commercials were better only because they were shorter, but I cannot remember a single product. What the jury found tedious was when a studio submitted its entire production slate for the year, or worse, submitted nearly all

pieces from a specific campaign. Is this an act of repressed lack of confidence to submit everything? Ego-centricism? Or a deficient ability to judge one's own work for quality? It is difficult for a jury to select one episode from among so many in a series.

Interestingly enough, a serious debate waged over a J.J. Sedelmaier production featuring a gas-passing Humphrey Bogart from a re-created *Casablanca* scene. Some believed the entry should be in competition, only so that the audience could see what non-traditional projects are coming out of America. The argument concluded with the piece relegated to panorama. It is insulting to artists who have worked so hard at their art to be included in a festival like Zagreb, only to share a category with a film about farting. Another curious must-see production is *Shikato* by Uruma Delvi Productions, Japan. This film is guaranteed to have an audience singing its contagious chant for days.

It is a true struggle to remain objective and address the film itself without deferring to one's own level of subjectivity.

The Croatian Entries

There were only three entries from Croatia: a student film, one series and a rather disappointing short professional film, titled *The Cake*. The student film was already accepted into panorama by virtue of having no competition and the series was only a promising beginning, therefore a lot of weight was put on *The Cake*. The film tells a story about a group of people sitting around a table cutting a cake.

The style is black and white and the figures are only representational, there are no details. When the slices are distributed it is discovered no two slices are equal. The people at the table begin to fight, cheat and find innumerable ways of getting a bigger slice until they war and nothing remains of the cake except crumbs. Then they repeat the same behavior and fight over the crumbs. Without the film's acceptance the host, Zagreb, a bastion of animation, wouldn't have any representative entry. Therefore, politically, it would not be good to exclude the film from the festival. It's a tough position to be in.

The Zagreb Festival is going to be a wonderful experience. If you are able to attend I highly recommend it. In the end, it still remains a mystery how to win approval of your art. Sometimes national encouragement, personal relation-

ships and politics play a role in deciding which selections are made. I believe that the artist must always drive from the spirit and continue to explore the mystery of creativity. It is a very personal endeavor. Being on the pre-selection committee has alerted me to my many personal challenges, and I have come away humbled from the lessons that hit me in the head like a brick when I wasn't looking.

**I have come away humbled
from the lessons that hit me in
the head like a brick when I
wasn't looking.**

The 1998 Zagreb Festival of Animated Films will take place June 17-21, 1998 in Zagreb, Croatia. For information, visit the Zagreb web site, accessible from Animation World Network's Animation Village.

View John R. Dilworth's comic strip, *Dirty Birdy* every month in *Animation World Magazine*.

John R. Dilworth is a New York-based animator whose award-winning films have been seen all over the world. Since his return from Zagreb, John has vowed to converse only in Croatian, so please keep this in mind when contacting him.

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MIP-TV: Animation in Crisis?

by Julien Dubois

The 35th MIP-TV, held in Cannes from April 3 to April 8, 1998, was marked by a slight lowering of attendance. The absence of South-East Asian countries, because of grave financial difficulties, partly explains this decrease. None of this hindered China, however, from making its intentions known to play an important role in the world television market. Central and Eastern Europe made a remarkable entrance into the market, especially the Russians, whose financial means are in full growth.

"The market for animated programs in Germany is very difficult, as well as in England, where many shows are stockpiled," stressed Peter Worsley, Director of Sales and Operations at Europe Images, one of the largest distribution companies in France. "The same in the United States, where there seems to be less money in the syndication market, and in Japan, where local productions remain quite dominant. On the other hand, there are opportunities where the market is growing, like in South America, Italy, and also in Spain for the regional broadcasts."

You're no longer there for show, but to do business.

In this general context, a remark by one of the participants perfectly sums up the ambiance of this MIP-TV: "You're no longer there for show, but to do business." MIP was calm, professional and very dynamic. The market is now at a stage where a company's library

demands priority. Without a doubt this year's MIP-TV allowed one to take note of the "new world order" which now reigns in the audiovisual program industry, that of the advent and multiplication of channels broadcast by cable and satellite, whose direction and buyers are presently clearly identified by the sellers.

Just Try to Get Some Air Time

"The principal difficulty at present consists of managing and trying to procure the broadcast windows between general and thematic channels," detailed Peter Worsley. This new order is evidently not without consequences in the production sector, which includes animated programs and series. "We're leaving a period in which animation production enjoyed a spectacular growth," explains Christian Davin of the French production company Alphanim. "Growth and the merging of companies have gone hand in hand in Europe and in the U.S.. However, independent American producers have suffered a lot from this phenomenon of vertical integration. European production, very successful thanks to the boom that took place in the old world, is currently very much in demand by the American market, which is looking to Europe for 20% to 30% of the financing for its programs." As an example of this point, one could cite the co-development and co-production agreement signed during MIP-TV between Porchlight Entertainment (U.S.) and Millimages (a European studio



Cartoon Network's inflatable character float livened up the bay and set the scene for the market in Cannes. Photo by and © Scott Ingalls.

grouping) for *The Rooties* (26 26-minute episodes), an "animated cartoon fantasy" destined for the four to eight year-old audience.

"The opportunities for co-production between the two continents have multiplied, while the cultural gap that separates them is less important," adds Christian Davin. "The artists have traveled a lot during the past five years. The Americans are less reticent than they used to be regarding artistic collaboration, and it's no longer rare that a series conceived in Europe finds partners and markets across the Atlantic. The world is getting smaller."

This year's MIP-TV allowed one to take note of the "new world order" which now reigns in the audiovisual program industry...

Shrinking Financing

And so is the market, it seems. Financing is becoming more difficult, due to the joint effect of



Photo by and © Scott Ingalls.

the fragmentation of the audience and the fall of advertising revenues from commercial broadcast channels, which have always been the only ones able to finance animation programs. Even if the new cable and satellite channels multiply pre-sales, as one saw at the MIP-TV, a recession is on the way. "We're entering a period of crisis," stressed Marc du Pontavice, director of Gaumont Multimedia. "A lot was produced during the last five years. The stockpile of programs is at the highest level. There is a very important multiplication of possibilities to broadcast programs, but at the same time there is a certain shrinking of the opportunities for financing."

Two trends will probably prevail over the market in the upcoming years: one, an increased concentration of production in fewer hands, and two, large studios will gather necessary capital by considerably augmenting their part of the market, which is on par with stressing the importance of a library and the management of rights to receipts. "When a market is on the verge of recession, you have to increase your part of the market," declared Robert Rea, Director

General of Ellipse at the opening ceremonies of MIP-TV. His department, Ellipsanime, the youth and family wing of Ellipse (a partner in audiovisual production with Canal+), announced shortly before this 35th MIP-TV its intention to expand its production considerably by going from 3 to 8 series a year and from 200 to 400 million francs [roughly \$33 million U.S. to \$67 million U.S.] of business volume. It is also a goal to double the size of the catalogue exploited by Ellipse and Canal+DA, which is currently 600 half-hours, within the next three years.

"We're entering a period of crisis," stressed Marc du Pontavice, director of Gaumont Multimedia.

For the independents, who work in Europe or across the Atlantic, the chances of survival undoubtedly rest in lowering costs. "Soon you won't be able to market a 2-D series for more than 35 million francs [roughly \$5.8 million U.S.], when the production is sub-contracted in Asia," Marc du Pontavice estimates. "With the new technologies — whole computers can be carried in the palm of your hand! — we're going to have to produce series of 26 episodes of 26-minute shows for less than 30 million francs [roughly \$5 million U.S.]."

Quality and Niche Audiences

Chapter series, if they want to sell, will have to prove their excellence on the level of

writing. In a market where the audience is more and more fragmented, the targeted audience evolves over time as a result. "We've left the Disney era," explains Christian Davin. "Animation today reaches a larger and larger public, a family public. There are a lot of projects in development, but still few venues for distribution of this type of program. One can expect that the venues will follow."

Gaumont MultiMedia announced during MIP-TV an agreement with TPS, a digital platform rivaling that of Canal+ in the French marketplace, involving the pre-purchase of the series *Oggy and the Cockroaches* (78 7-minute episodes), which will be broadcast every week in prime-time before a program on the cinema channel Cinestar. "The broadcasters need a programming leader, an engine," added Marc du Pontavice from his viewpoint. "There are niches to exploit with a very high-scale cartoon series. The positioning in prime-time is one of these niches. There will be many called but few chosen. The financing, which should be on a comparable level to live-action stories, is there. You have to be in the position to develop a series in which the writing is of excellent quality in order to convince the programmers that the audiences will follow."

Translated from French by William Moritz.

Julien Dubois is a journalist who lives in Paris, France. For 10 years, he has been exploring the wings of this gigantic dream industry, the television industry.

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Fred Flintstone in front of the Warner Bros. booth at MIP TV '98. Photo by and © Scott Ingalls.

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MIP-TV 98 : l'animation en crise ?

par Julien Dubois

La 35ème édition du MIP-TV qui s'est tenue à Cannes du 3 au 8 avril dernier a été marquée par une légère baisse de la fréquentation. L'absence des pays du sud-est asiatique, en proie à de graves difficultés financières, explique en partie cette légère décline. Ce qui n'a pas empêché la Chine de faire connaître son intention de jouer désormais un rôle de premier plan sur le marché mondial de la télévision. L'Europe centrale et l'Europe de l'Est ont, quant à elles, fait une entrée remarquée sur le marché, les russes notamment dont les moyens financiers sont en nette croissance. "Le marché des programmes d'animation est très dur en Allemagne et en Angleterre où les stocks sont très importants" souligne Peter Worsley, Director of Sales and Operation chez Europe Images, l'une des plus grandes sociétés de distribution française. "De même aux États-Unis où il y a, semble-t-il, moins d'argent sur le marché de la syndication, et au Japon où la production domestique reste très dominante. Il y a en revanche des opportunités en Amérique Latine, dont le marché se trouve en pleine croissance, en Italie mais aussi en Espagne auprès des chaînes régionales".

On est plus là pour frimer mais pour faire du business

Dans ce contexte général, une remarque de l'un des participants résume à merveille ce que fût l'ambiance de ce MIP-TV : "On est plus là pour frimer mais pour faire

du business". Pacifié, professionnel, ce marché où prime désormais la logique de catalogue a été très dynamique. Sans nul doute cette édition du MIP-TV a-t-elle permis de prendre acte du "nouvel ordre mondial" qui règne désormais dans l'industrie des programmes audiovisuels, celui de l'avènement et de la multiplication des chaînes diffusées par le câble et le satellite, dont les enseignes et les acheteurs sont à présent clairement identifiés par les vendeurs.

Des fenêtres de diffusion réduites

"La principale difficulté consiste à présent à gérer et essayer de concilier les fenêtres de diffusion entre chaînes hertziennes et chaînes thématiques" renchérit Peter Worsley. Cette nouvelle donne n'est évidemment pas sans conséquence sur le secteur de la production, y compris celui des programmes et des séries d'animation. "On sort d'une période durant laquelle le secteur de l'animation a connu une croissance spectaculaire" explique Christian Davin, Pdg de la société de production française Alphanim. "Croissance et concentration sont allées de pair en Europe comme aux États-Unis. Les producteurs indépendants américains ont beaucoup souffert de ce phénomène de concentration verticale. La production européenne, très dynamique grâce au boom qui a eu lieu sur le vieux continent, est à présent très sollicitée par le marché américain qui vient chercher en Europe 20 à 30% du financement de ses pro-



Le personnage gonflable de Cartoon Network, à flot dans la baie de Cannes, a donné le ton.
Photo et © Scott Ingalls.

grammes". On peut citer à ce titre l'accord de co-développement et de coproduction signé lors du MIP-TV entre Porshlight Entertainment et Millimages pour The Rooties (26x26'), un "animated cartoon fantasy" destiné au 4/8 ans.

Pacifié, professionnel, ce marché où prime désormais la logique de catalogue a été très dynamique.

"Les opportunités de coproduction entre les deux continents se sont multipliées tandis que le fossé culturel qui les séparait est moins important" ajoute Christian Davin. "Les artistes ont beaucoup voyagé ces cinq dernières années. Les américains sont moins réticents que par le passé en matière de collaboration artistique et il n'est plus rare qu'une série conçue en Europe trouve des partenaires et des débouchés outre-Atlantique. Le monde a rétréci".

Chute des financements

Le marché aussi, semble-t-il,



Photo et © Scott Ingalls.

sous l'effet conjugué de la fragmentation de l'audience et de la chute des revenus publicitaires des chaînes hertziennes, qui sont toujours les seules capables de financer les programmes d'animation. Et ce même si les chaînes du câble et du satellite multiplient les pré-achats comme on l'a vu lors du MIP-TV. "Nous entrons dans une période de crise" souligne pour sa part Marc du Pontavice, directeur de Gaumont Multimédia. "On a beaucoup produit ces cinq dernières années. Les stocks de programmes sont au plus haut niveau. Il y a une multiplication très importante des possibilités de diffuser des programmes en même temps qu'un rétrécissement certain des opportunités de financement".

Ainsi, deux logiques vont probablement prévaloir sur le marché ces prochaines années. Celle d'une concentration accrue de la production, de grands groupes étant tenté de ramasser la mise en augmentant considérablement leur part de marché, qui va de pair avec une logique de catalogue et de gestion de droits à recettes. "Quand un marché est au bord de la récession, il faut aug-

menter sa part de marché" déclarait Robert Réa, directeur général d'Ellipse à l'ouverture du MIP-TV. Son département, Ellipsanime, le pôle jeunesse & famille du groupe Ellipse (filiale de production audiovisuelle de Canal +), a annoncé peu avant cette 35ème édition son intention de développer considérablement sa production en passant de 3 à 8 séries par an et de 200 à 400 M.F. de volume d'affaires. Et ce dans l'objectif de doubler, d'ici 3 ans, la taille du catalogue exploité par Ellipse et Canal + DA (600 demi-heure à l'heure actuelle).

"Nous entrons dans une période de crise" souligne pour sa part Marc du Pontavice, directeur de Gaumont Multimédia.

Pour les indépendants, qu'ils oeuvrent en Europe ou Outre-Atlantique, les chances de survie résident sans doute dans la baisse des coûts. "Il ne va bientôt plus y avoir de marché pour des séries en 2D de plus de 35 M.F. dont la fabrication est sous-traitée en Asie" analyse Marc du Pontavice. "Avec les nouvelles technologies - le tout informatique est maintenant à portée de main - il va nous falloir produire des séries de 26x26' à moins de 30 M.F."

Des niches pour des programmes de qualité

Des séries moins chères mais qui devront, si elles veulent se vendre, faire preuve d'excellence sur le plan de l'écriture. Sur un marché où l'audi-

ence se fragmente de plus en plus en effet, les cibles évoluent. "On est sorti de l'ère Disney" explique quant à lui Christian Davin. "L'animation touche à présent un public de plus en plus large, un public familial. Il y a beaucoup de projets en développement mais encore peu de cases de diffusion pour ce type de programmes. On peut penser que les cases vont suivre".

Gaumont Multimédia a ainsi annoncé lors du MIP-TV un accord avec TPS, la plate-forme numérique concurrente de celle de Canal + sur le marché français, portant sur le pré-achat de la série Oggy et les cafards (78x7') qui sera diffusé chaque semaine en prime-time en avant programme sur la chaîne cinéma Cinestar. "Les diffuseurs ont besoin de tête de programmation, de locomotives" ajoute pour sa part Marc du Pontavice. "Il y a des niches à exploiter avec des séries de cartoon très haut de gamme. Le positionnement en prime-time est l'une de ces niches. Il y aura beaucoup d'appelés et peu d'élus. Les financements, dont les niveaux sont comparables à ceux des fictions, sont là. Il faut être en mesure de développer des séries dont l'écriture est d'excellente qualité pour convaincre les programmeurs que les audiences suivront".

Julien Dubois est journaliste. Il vit à Paris, France. Depuis 10 ans, il explore les coulisses de cette gigantesque machine à rêves qu'est la télévision.

Note: Les lecteurs peuvent contacter les collaborateurs d'Animation World Magazine en envoyant un e-mail à editor@awn.com.



Fred Flintstone devant le stand Warner Bros. au MIP TV '98. Photo et © Scott Ingalls.

Stuttgart: A Splendid Festival

by William Moritz

The ninth Stuttgart Animation Festival took place from April 3 through April 8, 1998. I flew in on Swissair, and I thought the festival had begun early since the videos on passenger safety were all computer animations, with svelte passengers who could really bend double and curl up to get the life vests from under the seats. Stuttgart is a fine old city, with elegant palaces and gardens that were home to the princes of the Swabian state of Baden-Württemberg, and imposing modern skyscrapers from its more recent hosting of major industry, like the Mercedes-Benz company. It rests on the Neckar river which flows from Heidelberg in the north to the Danube and the Black Forest in the south, one of Germany's finest vineyard stretches. Stuttgart also boasts a superb Art Museum that seemed to have two good examples of everything, as well as a wonderful temporary exhibit of more than 100 photos and objects by Man Ray.

The programs offered at the festival were rich and diverse.

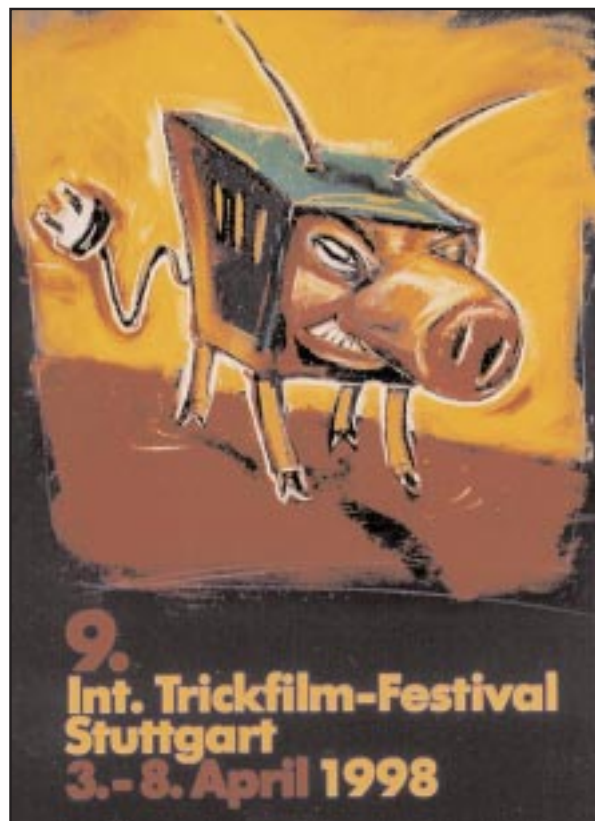
A Well-Oiled Machine

The festival centered around the huge Maritim Hotel, where many of the festival participants stayed. The main screening room, the Old Riding Hall, was in this hotel, as was the festival information center. A portable tent just outside provided drinks, light snacks,

and a convenient meeting or resting place for the festival goers. The second main screening area was a concert hall less than a block away which also contained a bar and restaurant, as well as exhibition rooms (with a display of Yoji Kuri's artworks), a special animation book shop, and a computer area where people could browse the Absolut Panushka animation web site. Three other screening places were a few blocks farther away in the lively downtown business district. Plus, a few special events, including demonstration workshops with the jury members (I overheard one festival-goer say that the highlight of the festival for her was being able to touch Barry Purves' puppets...) and an exposition of Ladislav Starevitch puppets and designs, took place at the more distant Film Academy in Ludwigsburg, which was easily accessible by subway (as was everything else...). The festival was well-publicized not only in local media, but also in Germany's major news-magazine *Spiegel*. Some of the screenings were attended by at least 40,000 people.

The Programs and Events

The programs offered at the festival were rich and diverse. In



addition to the regular competition screenings, a special Young Animation competition gave a \$20,000 prize to one of the student films from 39 different schools worldwide. Another competition screening, "Tricks for Kids," provided an international selection of films for children every afternoon. A "Best of Animation" series concentrated on the 20 years from Norstein's 1975 *Heron And The Crane* to David Anderson's 1994 *In The Time Of Angels*. A series of feature animations included Raoul Servais' *Taxandria*, Pierre Hebert's *The Human Plant*, and Svankmajer's *Conspirators Of Pleasure*. Other programs screened films by the jury members;



The main screening room, the Old Riding Hall, in the Maritim Hotel, was the center of Stuttgart festival activity. Photo by and © Bill Moritz.

a survey of Japanese art animation as well as an anime retrospective; programs of commercials, MTV videos, special effects and computer graphics; retrospectives for Yoji Kuri, Magnus Carlsson, Marjut Rimminen, Jiri Brdecka and Marv Newland; and midnight shows of classic American cartoons, from Disney's Alice in the '20s through Betty Boop and George Pal's Jasper, Tashlin and Avery, to UPA's Mr. Magoo. If you'd already seen these, you could go to the usual midnight parties... Some 60 films in competition screened in six programs, which were repeated a second time for the convenience of the audience. Aside from the excellent projection

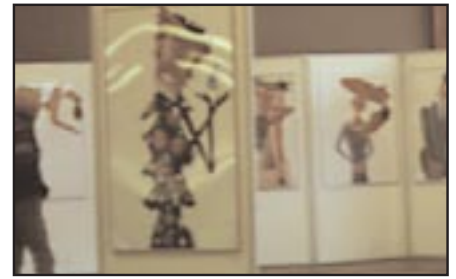


The Saint Inspector. © bolexbrothers.

— a giant screen with clear focus in all the various formats — the competition programs seemed unique to me, a veteran of dozens of festivals, in that obviously someone had looked at all the films carefully and put them together sensitively into programs of a certain common style, mood, and subject-matter, which made for smooth viewing and a heightened, comparative critical discrimination. The program booklet also listed filmographies for most of the filmmakers, so one could see the difference between someone like Daniel Szczechura who has made some 25 films since 1960, and others who just began a few years ago, or who have made only a few films. The Jury consisted of Russian Garri Bardin, Dutch (Canadian) Paul Driessen, German Thomas Meyer-Hermann, French Florence Miaille, and English Barry Purves. The choices could not have been easy, because there were many fine and diverse films among those selected for competition. Since Stuttgart is held every-other year, films made in late 1996 were eligible for competition, which meant that a number of the films had been seen and won prizes at other festivals, an increasing problem with the proliferation of festivals... The unfortunate results, I suspect, is that those "deja vu" films really have a harder chance at the prizes, even if they are obviously the best.

The Prize Winners:

The grand prize of \$7,500 (15,000 DM) went to *How Wings Are Attached To The Backs Of Angels* by Craig Welch, National Film Board of Canada — a chilling surrealist guignol in the tradition of Jan Lenica, finely detailed cel ani-



The Yoji Kuri exhibit was a rare treat. Photo by and © Bill Moritz.

mation, excellent Normand Roger sound.

Jury comment: "For its brilliant draughtsmanship and the density of the icy, nightmarish atmosphere it creates."

State Capital Stuttgart Award: The equivalent of U.S. \$7,500 (15,000 DM) went to *Pink Doll* by Valentin Olschwang of Swerdlowsk Film Studios in Russia — tale, drawn on paper almost in a children's style, of a little girl whose mother has a lover and so, gives her a doll as a present to distract her, which doesn't quite work... Jury comment: "For its sensitive depiction of childhood anguishes."

International ProSieben Award for Animated Film (to promote the acceptance of animation as an art form): \$10,000 (20,000 DM) to *The Great Migration* by Yuri Cherenkov, produced by Folimage in France — a charming story of migrating birds who get lost in a storm. Jury comment: "For a film flawless in every element."

Outstanding Children's Film: \$2,500 (5,000 DM) to *Charlie's Christmas* by Jacques-Remy Girerd of Folimage — very much in modern children's book illustration style, and nearly half-an-hour long. Jury comment: "This complex story is full of humor, humanity and touching observations."

Three Public Prizes were awarded by viewers of the region-

al television network (SÜDWEST 3), which broadcast a selection of films over a three-day period and tallied viewer response:

A number of the films had been seen and won prizes at other festivals, an increasing problem with the proliferation of festivals...

- \$7,500 (15,000 DM) First Prize: *Death And The Mother* by Ruth Lingford of the British company Ownbrand Animation Ltd. — a 2-D computer graphic which looked much like Masereel wood-cuts, telling the tale of a mother who pursues Death when he takes her child.
- \$5,000 (10,000 DM) Second Prize: *The Devil Went Down To Georgia* by Mike Johnson, listed as a puppet film (though PDI got a credit) - charming visualization of the Charlie Daniels country music classic.
- \$2,500 (5,000 DM) Third Prize: *Wheel of Life* by the British artist Vera Neubauer — a very demanding 16-minute mixture of live-action and object animation on biblical and mythological motifs, with feminist and ecological overtones.

International Mercedes-Benz Sponsorship Prize for Animated Film \$20,000 (40,000 DM) scholarship-grant to *Un Jour (One Day)* by Marie Paccou of the French company 2001 — a sharp and moving 2-D computer animation, in a simple black-and-white graphic style again reminiscent of wood-cuts, depicting a woman's reminiscence about her husbands or lovers. This prize includes the realization of an

independent production in conjunction with a one-year scholarship at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. Jury comment: "For a film that dealt with a bizarre idea in a matter-of-fact way. We look forward to the next film."

Landeskreditbank Baden-Württemberg Award for the most innovative film: \$3,000 (6,000 DM) to *Frühling (Spring)* by Silke Parzich from the Film Academy of Baden-Württemberg — an object animation synchronized to Vivaldi's music, in which chairs, a table and forks cavort. Jury comment: "Surprising images choreographed to its soundtrack make a unique film."

Stuttgart is a fine old city, with elegant palaces and gardens ... and imposing modern skyscrapers...

Stiftung Landesgirokasse Award for the best student film: \$2,500 (5,000 DM) to Willy, *The Voice Of Europe* by Marion Thibaut from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Gent, Belgium. Jury comment: "Even after several viewings by the jury, the film had lost none of its intelligent lightness. [The film] convinced the jury on the strength of its charming protagonist, its delicate irony and contemporary subject matter."

\$1,500 for the funniest film to Bill Plympton's *Sex And Violence*. Jury comment: "The joke about the key was more than enough to win this award."

My Analysis...

Most of these prize-winning



Craig Welch's *How Wings are Attached to the Backs of Angels*. Image courtesy of the national Film Board of Canada.

films were very good, but I would have given some of the prizes to other films. Alexander Petrov's *The Mermaid* is an astonishingly beautiful tour-de-force of painting skill, and lovely in its romanticism. Though, it is two years old and has been seen at other festivals before I would have given it a prize nonetheless. Similarly, Hans Nassenstein's haunting evocation of war and its aftermath *Fugue*, with its surreal settings for puppet animation seems to me a great film, even if two years old. Solveig von Kleist's *The Story Of My Soul* also explored adult emotions with a striking graphic style and definitely deserved recognition with astonishing touches, like the birds settling on the telephone wires to form musical notes. In addition, Richard Reeves' seven-minute *Linear Dreams*, with both abstract images and music drawn directly on the film, was obviously in the great Canadian tradition of Norman McLaren. However, this independent, west-coast production had a vitality and beauty all its own, quite unlike McLaren, Sistiaga or other practitioners in the field, and deserved some recognition.

The winners of some cate-

gories seemed problematic to me. Silke Parzich's *Spring* is a delightful film, but closely related to object animation pioneered by the Quay brothers and others (and hence, not all that innovative). Other competition films showed much more unique, adventurous techniques and ideas, such as Clive Walley's combination of live-action, animation and disembodied brush strokes of paint in *Light Of Uncertainty*, which fittingly evoked Heisenberg's "Uncertainty principle," and ultimately did it some justice. Aleksandra Korejwo's *Carmen Torero*, with its sinuous animation (using a feather) of tinted salt was quite fresh. Most problematic for me was "funniest film." I'm no fan of sick and twisted, and Bill Plympton seems very much of that school. I find his gags mostly tasteless, vulgar, and (even worse) predictable and repet-

itive. To me, the funniest film was Igor Kovalyov's *Bird In The Window* (another 1966 veteran), which may show that I'm sick and twisted, but Igor manages to make fresh social criticism at the same time he engenders real belly-laughs. I also preferred the quirky humor of Sylvain Chomet's *Old Lady And The Pigeons*, another subtle combination of fresh social satire with outrageous spoof. Mike Booth's puppet animation *The Saint Inspector* (from England's bolexbrothers) also combined truly quirky images with biting satire into very funny scenes. In addition Mark Gustafson's droll "puppet" animation *Bride Of Resistor* (from Will Vinton) broke new territory in social whimsy. It was a very rich festival for humor — *The Great Migration* and *Devil Went Down To Georgia* were plenty funny, as well — so it was disappointing to see

such a formula product win the prize. But I guess that's a small grumble against what was overall a splendid animation festival.

Save up to visit Stuttgart X in April 2000.

Visit the Stuttgart web site in Animation World Network's Animation village.

Stuttgart is a fine old city, with elegant palaces and gardens ... and imposing modern skyscrapers...

William Moritz teaches film and animation history at the California Institute of the Arts.

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General Chaos: Uncensored Animation

by Mark Segall

Manga Entertainment, an Island International Company and distributor of anime, enters the scant market of touring theatrical animation releases with General Chaos: Uncensored Animation. It's about time another player steps into the ring, but unfortunately, for this first bid, the program is uneven in quality and inconsistent in tone. However, is the intent of Manga's first adult shorts compilation to compete with Spike and *Mike's Sick & Twisted Festival of Animation* or to expand the category to include more mature, thought-provoking fare?



© Manga

Uncensored Animation has its best moments when it doesn't try to compete with Sick & Twisted.

The Down Side

Series creator Jan Cox helped Spike produce *Sick & Twisted* for five years, and she's taken some artists along with her. One holdover I can do without: Tony Nitoli. His one-joke film about a cracker-addicted parrot fails to develop the idea in any interesting way and quickly becomes tedious. (The puppet animator made a slightly better film for Spike a few years back featuring a depraved Santa Claus.)

Another one-joke wonder: *American Flatulators*. The title's enough. Why make the film? The clay-animated pseudo-trailer *No More Mr. Nice Guy* doesn't have one-quarter of the wit found in action-movie parodies regularly tossed off by The Simpsons' writers. In the just plain mystifying category is *Sunny Havens* (A.K.A. *Meat!!!!*).

In Kathryn Travers' 1:16 minute cel animation a truck full of Francis Baconesque sides of beef pulls up to a trailer park. A toothless man gets out, hollers, "Meat!" over and over, then drops dead.

Those are the shorts I would have ditched completely if I were the compiler. I'd also lose the "wacky cast of characters" created by Bardel Animation in Canada to introduce the show. This on screen audience of uninspired stereotypes (a granny, a beauty queen, the tough-talking General Chaos himself) fairly shout out, "Look at us! We're filler!" The sexy, bloody, funny vignettes from Bill Plympton interspersed throughout already provide a framing device, or through line, if one is needed. They also provide a visible reminder that few cel animators come close to Plympton's level of

draftsmanship. (Perhaps *Sex and Violence*—the seven minute Plympton short commissioned for this collection should have been shown in one piece just in order to not show up any of the other contributors.) My favorite Plympton gag: a man stops mid-orgasm to floss.

The Bright Side

Outside of Plympton's tour de force, and the wonderfully obvious punning of *Beat The Meatles*, Uncensored Animation has its best moments when it doesn't try to compete with *Sick & Twisted*. "There are many films in my show that Spike would pass up," Cox points out. Example: Mike Booth's *The Saint Inspector*, a wordless story in which a buddhalike figure meditating on a high platform is fussily scrutinized by a whirring, clicking, mechanical bureaucrat. The Inspector, created by Lee Wilton and Natalie Clark, is an inspired assemblage of bits and pieces.

Cox's collection also diverges from Spike's by introducing two strange and sexy films by women: Frances Lea's *Oh Julie!*, and Emily Skinner's *The Perfect Man*.

Oh Julie! chronicles a night of passion aided by augmented body



Sex and Violence. © Bill Plympton.



The Saint Inspector. © olexbrothers.

parts and other accouterments. Julie won't be seen naked before she has tucked her excess fat out of sight with alligator clips and put on a big blonde wig, and a special pair of "oral sex lips". She greets her lover under a blue light, à la *Flashdance*.

other.

Emily Skinner strikes a more macabre note in her puppet film, *The Perfect Man*. A mustachioed dandy gallops up and scales a high tower to "rescue" a sweet, innocent-

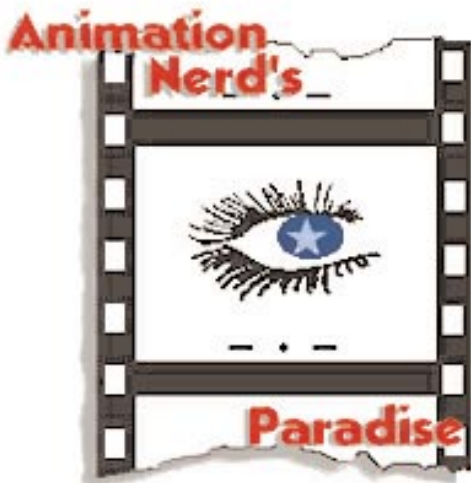
As he switches the music to change the mood, she puts on larger breasts. Julie's not the only one worried about superficial inadequacies. The man is ashamed of his pot-belly and he fussily relocates unsightly tufts of body hair. When Julie is less than impressed by his sexual equipment, he straps on a giant flashing glow-in-the-dark dick, and is pleased to see it inspire her operatic appreciation. There is also an unexpectedly happy ending: they wake the next morning, their apparatus cast aside, and find they have genuine affection for each

looking damsel. She captures him and ties him down, for what he thinks will be a kinky little tryst, but turns out to be a bit of unasked-for surgery. The golden-tressed beauty is building the perfect man and she wants his contribution.

Cox's collection also diverges from Spike's by introducing two strange and sexy films by women...

Good Lookin' Stuff

I found some of the films notable for their looks, like the computer tweaked Victoriana of Laurence Arcadia's *The Donor Party*. Flat cutouts are assembled into hallways using "2.5D software" from Apple. Through his opera glass, our hero/spy observes a corseted belle, a dog-faced man, and some experimental surgery eagerly watched by a roomful of the surgeon's past mistakes. I'm partial to Eric Fogel's *Mad-Max*-like student film *Mutilator*. I always liked the weird look, atmos-



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The Donor Party. © Laurence Arcadia

phere and pace of his MTV series *The Head*. In *Espresso Depresso*, some handsomely stylized beanery stereotypes meet a bad end at the hands of a distracted valley-girl waitress. The splatterific *Performance Art by Chainsaw Bob* is surprisingly well-designed and pleasant to watch. I also enjoyed *Beat The Meatles'* misshapen "Head" Sullivan, and the gloriously ugly "Meatlemaniaks" who say things like, "I wanna touch one afore I diel!" Joel Brinkerhoff's *Zerox & Mylar* has an interesting half-drawn, half-sculpted look, but it's Tom and Jerry derivative humor failed to amuse me.

I've got mixed feelings about the Manga-commissioned *Hungry Hungry Nipples*, a deliberately crude and under-animated piece carried by music and wall-to-wall narration. The fake French accent is funny, especially saying things like, "He killed their happy motherfucking asses". It bothers me, however, that the "Nipples" rap song which retells the character-crammed tale of Jean-Jean, his nasty Mom, the bow-tied, two-legged Nipples, the Evil Cat and "the flying Richard

Nixon baseball bat" is a hell of a lot funnier than the story as pictured.

For Manga's collections, Cox envisions an audience that's less exclusively male, rather containing more women and couples.

Long Term Plans

If Manga's collection is going for fewer gross-outs and more female points of view, it will achieve an identity distinct from Spike and Mike's. Cox is aiming for a more international flavor and a wider release that will make her festival "less of a cult thing" than that of her former boss. She sees the theatrical market as big enough for the both of them, plus several others. "Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a couple of compilations a year to choose from?" she said. For her, "adult" doesn't just equal "shocking and perverse." For Manga's collections, Cox envisions an audience that's less exclusively male, and more equally composed of women and couples. In fact, acting as a "teaser"

in front of *General Chaos* is *Quest*, the Academy Award winning short from Tyron Montgomery and Thomas Stellmach, which will be showcased in a later all ages show entitled *Art Gallery*. Bringing a more diverse selection of films into the mainstream American marketplace is surely something we should all support.

However, my overall verdict of this show? Not bad for a first outing. Spike has had twenty years to get his act together (and even it's still pretty uneven!). So, good luck, Manga Entertainment. I'm looking forward to a stronger selection next time around.

General Chaos: Uncensored Animation is now touring theaters around the country. For more information call 1-888-4MANGA1. General Chaos will be released on video in September 1998 by Manga Entertainment.

Mark Segall has won awards for labor journalism and public service copywriting. He co-authored How To Make Love To Your Money (Delacorte, 1982) with his wife, Margaret Tobin. He is also editor of ASIFA-East's aNYmator newsletter.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The Entertainment/Marketing/Exploitation Relationship: Two Takes

book reviews by Buzz Potamkin

If you're a regular reader of *AWM* and/or a ceaseless toiler in the bowels of our beloved industry, and you've taken the time to read this review, then most likely you're already aware that the *sine qua non* of animation these days is filthy lucre. And most of that comes from, passes through, or is caused by what J. M. Barrie called the cruelest creatures - in other words, kids, those loving little tykes who hold in their hands the future of civilization.

I've read two of them (Acuff and Pecora), and it's the differences that make them interesting.

While not news to us, this Entertainment/Marketing/Exploitation relationship is viewed as a recently evolved predicament by the wider society - the civilians who wind up paying for it. The result has been a rash of books on what to us seems to be the obvious: the symbiotic bonding of entertaining kids with marketing to them. These books have such catchy titles as *Kids' Stuff: Toys and the Changing World of American Childhood*, by Gary Cross, (Harvard University Press); *Toy Wars: The Epic Struggle Between G.I. Joe, Barbie and the Companies That Make Them*, by G. Wayne Miller, (Times Books/Random House); *What Kids Buy and Why: The Psychology of Marketing to Kids*, by Dan S. Acuff (with Robert

H. Reiner), (Free Press); and *The Business of Children's Entertainment*, by Norma Odom Pecora, (Guilford). Still awake?

What do these books have in common, other than a predilection to use colons in their titles? Well, two of them are by academics, and another is by two Ph.D.s, so I guess we should be proud that we've come to attract such attention. Plus, they all sell for between U.S. \$25 and \$30, considerably more than most of the toys, etc., that they lovingly explore. I've read two of them (Acuff and Pecora), and it's the differences that make them interesting.

A Down-To-Earth Text

What Kids Buy is a fascinating book. Acuff details in a very informative and breezy style his explicit approach to creating for and selling to kids. Anybody who can write this sort of marketing treatise and quote sources as disparate as Piaget, Erikson, Santayana, Keats, James Baldwin, and Stephen Vincent Benet deserves our thanks - and our attention. Unlike most books from "inside the kid biz," this one does not presume the reader is incapable of understanding complex realities, nor does it treat a very serious subject in the "rah-rah" style of so many marketing books.

Both Acuff and Reiner (his

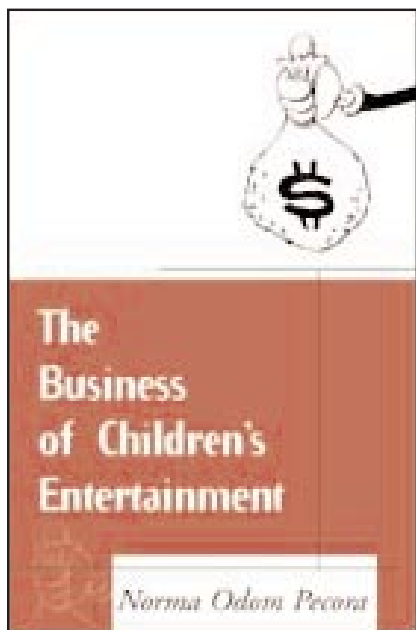


colleague) have studied the emotional, intellectual and physical growth patterns of children, and their knowledge shows. They take what all too many people judge to be a simple monolithic market (Kids) and

break it down into five component parts: birth through 2, 3 through 7, 8 through 12, 13 through 15, and 16 through 19. To anyone who has wondered why certain types of humor, adventure and character seem to "work" for one age but not another, their insight into age and gender delineate the differences in a clear and concise manner, even if the accompanying lists do run mind-numbingly long in a few places. Furthermore, unlike many apologists for the toy business, they acknowledge that all of us do have a societal responsibility to kids; they pull no punches in criticizing properties that do not serve the best interests of kids (disempowering vs. empowering), mainly for glorifying violence.

Here's Another Story...

The Business of Children's Entertainment is a different story. I approached reading this book with great expectations: it's "a masterful work" (Prof. Henry Giroux quoted on the dust jacket), and "a sharply



focused road map" (David W. Kleeman, also from the dust jacket). I really wanted to like it. Don't you want people to understand your industry, in the same way you understand other industries from afar? I was sadly disappointed. Not surprisingly, this "serious" book takes us to task in a denunciation that is filled with righteous indignation and concern for the exploitation of children. For that, I was prepared. Disdain for our work and criticism of industry methods is old news in academic circles, combining to form an immense monomyth that is nearly

Anybody who can ... quote sources as disparate as Piaget, Erikson, Santayana, Keats, James Baldwin, and Stephen Vincent Benet deserves our thanks - and our attention.

impossible to dislodge.

So while I was prepared for the content, I was not prepared for the form. This book is a volume of The Guilford Communications Series, and is therefore presumably intended for the text book market. (According to the publisher's web

site, the book "[s]erves as a supplementary text in courses on mass media and society, media management, media economics, and in education courses that look at popular culture.") In that case, we got major problems.

We should all be concerned that this pastiche will serve as the "standard work" for understanding the Kids business.

Anyone in our industry who reads this book will be struck by its off-hand use of mis-information. When I read it, I filled seven pages with notes of incorrect or incomplete facts and assertions, which range from the ridiculous to the sublime, and my notes are far from complete. (One brief example: "...in the early 1980s, ... cable was available to less than 8% of the television households...." [pg. 161] According to figures from the research mavens at the National Cable Television Museum, by 1981 cable subscribers were at least 20% of all TV households, and cable was available to at least 35%. The difference between 8% and 35% is significant.)

And, at a time when many of the major participants in this industry are more than willing to discuss their work with anyone who shows an honest interest, the majority of Pecora's sources (and there is a 15 page list of References) are either the "trades," mass media magazines and newspapers, or advertising hand-outs - not exactly the best sources for factual information in an industry well known for hyperbole. As far as I can tell, there is only one primary source interview, and no cited correspondence with anyone else inside the

industry. Nor is there any reference to direct contact with Nielsen Media Research - surely the major source of raw data when it comes to viewing patterns and ratings, and especially important when one considers the impact on the kids numbers (in the late 1980s) of the change in ratings methodology.

We should all be concerned that this pastiche will serve as the "standard work" for understanding the Kids business. I can already hear politicians looking for an easy "hit" quoting chapter and verse from Pecora, not to mention media critics, editorial writers, and journalists. Surely we deserve better.

What Kids Buy and Why: The Psychology of Marketing to Kids, by Dan S. Acuff (with Robert H. Reiner), New York, NY: Free Press, 1997. 206 pages. ISBN: 0684834480 (U.S. \$28 hardcover).

The Business of Children's Entertainment, by Norma Odom Pecora, Guilford Press, 1997. 190 pages. ISBN: 1572302801 (U.S. \$30 hardcover).

Buzz Potamkin is an award-winning independent producer, best known for The Berenstain Bears and Dr. Seuss. Before he escaped L.A. for New York, he had been president of Southern Star Prods and then executive vice president of Hanna-Barbera Cartoons.

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The Anime! Movie Guide: Different But Equal

book review by Brian Camp

Helen McCarthy, former editor of *Anime UK* and author of *Anime! A Beginner's Guide to Japanese Animation* (Titan Books, London, 1993), is England's preeminent proponent of Japanese animation. Her most recent book *The Anime! Movie Guide* serves as a useful companion volume to last year's *The Complete Anime Guide: Japanese Animation Film Directory and Resource Guide* (reviewed in AWM, July 1997) co-authored by Trish Ledoux, editor of the magazine, *Animerica* and an equally tireless advocate of anime in the U.S.

McCarthy's book includes information, primarily plot synopses, on dozens of titles not yet officially released in the west, including, where possible, always hard-to-find credit information. As such the book gives the diligent reader a more accurate picture of the scope of Japanese animation than do most English-language sources. McCarthy includes numerous soap operas, teen romances and sports dramas (tennis, softball, soccer) that are unlikely to surface in the west. However, the book's structure is particularly unwieldy for newcomers to anime.

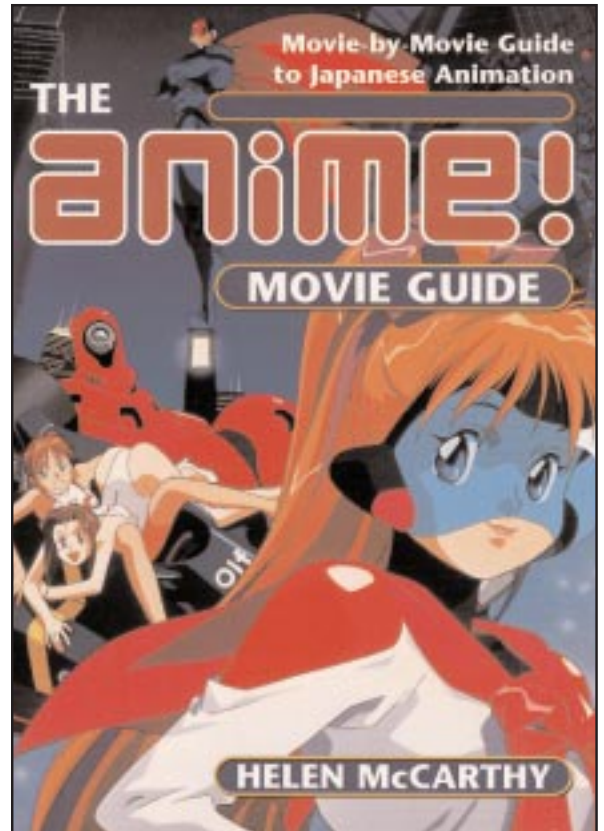
McCarthy's book includes information...on dozens of titles not yet officially released in the west...

An Awkward Structure

Unlike Ledoux's book, which compiled entries alphabetically for

all anime titles released in the U.S., McCarthy's book adopts a chronological structure divided into chapters devoted to each year from 1983 to 1995 inclusive, with each chapter split into alphabetical listings of theatrical and original animation video (OAV) releases. Such a structure requires readers to look up titles they're seeking in a (small-print) index. To locate all the titles in a particular long-running series (e.g. *Dirty Pair* or *Ranma 1/2*) one must make frequent trips to the index. People looking for a particular genre or style of anime will have no choice but to read everything. There is no genre index and the genre abbreviations used in the individual entries are confusing.

I normally favor a chronological approach but only when the goal is a broad historical overview to chart changes, improvements, and growth in the field. The encyclopedic approach makes it hard to detect patterns over the years. Ledoux's book at least makes it easy to find individual titles and conveniently places all entries in a particular series in one place. By starting in 1983, the first year of OAV releases, McCarthy leaves out several key animated features from the 1970s and early '80s, including the first



four *Space Cruiser Yamato* features, *Galaxy Express 999*, *Adieu Galaxy Express 999*, *Phoenix 2772*, *Toward the Terra*, *Arcadia of My Youth*, *Castle Cagliostro*, *Cyborg 009*, the *Mobile Suit Gundam* features and the first Japanese animated feature released in the U.S., *Alakazam the Great*. Also, by leaving out television series (more and more of which are being released on video in the U.S.), we don't get entries for the television versions of *Ranma 1/2*, *Mobile Suit Gundam*, *Patlabor*, *Sailor Moon*, *Dragonball Z*, *Captain Harlock*, *Dancougar*, and the three series that made up the American series, *Robotech*.

Reviewing the Reviews

While Ledoux had a staff of 15 contributors assisting in the reviews, McCarthy has taken on the Herculean task of reviewing nearly a thousand titles all by her lonesome. Predictably, the quality of the reviews varies wildly. The majority of her entries are primarily synopses. While synopses are helpful, and at times necessary, they need to be accompanied by critique. Unfortunately, McCarthy has the fan writer's crippling predilection for emphasizing plot over stylistic description. I generally want to know what a film looks like, what it's similar to, and what its stylistic trademarks are; only occasionally does McCarthy convey this.

Unlike Ledoux's book, which compiled entries alphabetically for all anime titles released in the U.S., McCarthy's book adopts a chronological structure...

To her credit, McCarthy makes clear which titles she hasn't seen by including a question mark after the star rating or by not including a rating at all. Her admitted lack of knowledge of many of the titles is particularly frustrating. Some entries are simply one or two lines long. In some, she simply says, "I have no information about this title," or she invokes hearsay by declaring, "I haven't seen it but I hear it's the same mixture as before." Also frustrating are cases where I have seen the tapes in question, and need information on them, but she hasn't and includes no information.

That said, some of her reviews are quite good. She evidently put a lot of thought into those films she particularly likes, most notably Hayao Miyazaki's films

(*Nausicäa, Laputa: Castle in the Sky, My Neighbor Totoro, Kiki's Delivery Service, Porco Rosso*). She gives informative critiques on a number of other significant titles including *The Dagger of Kamui, Mobile Suit Gundam: Char's Counterattack, Project A-Ko, The Tale of Genji, Legend of the Overfiend, Record of Lodoss War, The Weathering Continent, The Cockpit, Legend of Galactic Heroes*, and *Kishin Corps*. She also provides intriguing write-ups on a number of titles I was previously unfamiliar with, including *KO Century Beast Warriors, The Sensualist, Mosaica, Run Melos!, Armour Hunter Mellowlink, Ramayana, Coo of the Far Seas* and *Oz*.

She also includes Studio Ghibli productions not directed by Miyazaki like, *Only Yesterday, I Can Hear the Ocean, Pom Poko*, and *Whisper of the Heart*, making this the first western book to review these wonderful films. However, the reviews of these titles are too short, as are those for a number of other significant titles, including *Final Yamato, Harmageddon, Macross: Do You Remember Love?, Mobile Suit Gundam F91, Wicked City, Midnight Eye Goku, Ninja Scroll, Demon City Shinjuku, Cyber City Oedo, Peacock King, Memories*, and *Big Wars*.

Creative Credits

McCarthy doesn't duplicate Ledoux's effort to connect works by identifying key personnel and their other creative credits. McCarthy, in fact, offers no personnel index. I noted certain names, including writers Yoshiki Tanaka and Noboru Aikawa, popping up repeatedly but would have had to go back over the whole book to compile their credits. I turned to Ledoux's book for a list of their credits, but her index doesn't include the many titles

that haven't yet been released in the U.S.

McCarthy's writing style, while informal and chatty at times and highly opinionated at others, should prove very comfortable to hard-core anime fans.

Still, *The Anime! Movie Guide* contains a lot of information not available elsewhere, including synopses of titles that some of us may have in untranslated versions on video, and detailed credit info on other titles. McCarthy's writing style, while informal and chatty at times and highly opinionated at others, should prove very comfortable to hard-core anime fans. She is clearly passionate about the medium and shares many of her readers' biases. Her views on many of the sexually explicit titles are particularly sensible in light of some of the hysterical reactions that occasionally erupt. Overall, despite its flaws, the book is a necessary addition to one's growing anime library.

The Anime! Movie Guide, by Helen McCarthy. Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1997. 285 pages, illustrated. ISBN: 0-87951-781-6 (U.S. \$17.95 paper).

*Brian Camp is Program Manager at CUNY-TV, the City University of New York cable TV station. He has written about Japanese animation for *Outre Magazine* and *The Motion Picture Guide* and has also written for *Film Comment, Film Library Quarterly, Sightlines, The New York Daily News* and *Asian Cult Cinema*.*

Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Anima Animus Animation

by Wendy Jackson

Alexander Alexeieff & Claire Parker. John & Faith Hubley. John Halas & Joy Batchelor. Nag & Gisèle Ansorge. Jan & Eva Svankmajer. In the history of animation as a fine art, there are a handful of couples who have achieved the marriage of their lives, love and art.

One of the most prolific and artistically experimental of these partnerships is that of Czech filmmaker Jan Svankmajer and painter/sculptor Eva Svankmajerová. Independently and together, the two artists have worked in nearly every medium imaginable: animation and live-action film, sculpture, collage, print-making, painting and poetry. "Although they choose different approaches, both Jan and Eva Svankmajer seem to have been following the same goal on various levels and planes of expression," observes Frantisek Dryje in his essay in the new book about the Svankmajers' creative work, *Anima Animus Animation: Between Film and Free Expression* from Prague-based Slovart Publishers. This sturdy volume is the closest thing to a "coffee table book" ever published about either artist. The publication



accompanies current exhibitions of the Svankmajers' work throughout their country, including the Czech Gallery of Modern Art, the Regional Gallery of Vysocina, and the East Bohemian Gallery, Pardubice. Itself an exhibition within a book, the pictorially rich *Anima Animus Animation* is an excellent visual companion to *Dark Alchemy: The Films of Jan Svankmajer*, a collection of analytical texts edited by Peter Hames and published by Greenwood Press in 1995.

A Gallery in a Book

More than 100 luscious, full color prints and close to 200 more black and white illustrations depict

selections from the Svankmajers' extensive body of work. Prints of paintings, machines, tactile objects, films, pottery, puppets and collages are mixed with poems, interviews, screenplays, games, diaries, texts and dreams. The book is divided into ten loosely-interpreted "chapters," each beginning with a brief statement on the themes commonly explored in their work: Anima, Animus, Animation; The Structures of the Beginning; Eros and Thanatos; Historia Naturae; Touch and Gesture; Manipulation and the Puppet; Alchemy and Magic; Games and Dreams; the Arcimboldo Principle and The Increased Difficulty of Communication. The back of the book contains 12 pages of biographies, a joint filmography, and bibliographies of exhibitions, catalogs and texts written on both artists.

...animation is magic and the animator is the shaman and in this, just as in matters of love, there is no right of appeal. - Jan Svankmajer

Highlights

Chapter I (Anima, Animus, Animation) contains prints of animated objects and collages; sequentially arranged pieces of art which are not filmed, but which illustrate small progressive or repeated movements. Five ceramic vases give birth to a cup in "Birth," a metal spoon feeds lumps of clay to itself in

"Autocannibalism," and abstract figures alternate body parts in "Excuse me, but you have valuable tubes inside you."

Playing with puppets is one of the most wonderful forms of communication there is, as we all know from time immemorial. - Eva Svankmajerová

In Chapter VII (Alchemy and Magic), a selection of diary entries written by Jan Svankmajer in 1993, describe the ominous ill fortune that befell the cast and crew of the film *Faust* during and after its production (the film's star, Petr Cepek, mysteriously died shortly afterwards). After being asked by a journalist what he thought of the re-release of Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, Svankmajer also writes, "Walt Disney is one of the leading destroyers of European culture. Perhaps most significant, because he destroys it in utero in children's minds."

In Chapter IX (The Arcimboldo Principle), we see a collection of work inspired by the 16th century Mannerist artist, Giuseppe Arcimboldo, whose composite-head paintings inspired 2-D works and films such as *Dimensions of Dialogue*, which won Svankmajer the grand prize at Annecy in 1982.

In Chapter X (The Increased Difficulty of Communication), we see iconographic studies, such as rebus paintings by Eva Svankmajerová which use images and hands in sign language poses to depict visual riddles for the viewer to decipher.

Words on Paper

Although the book is published in Prague, with support from Czech organizations, the text is published solely in English. While the

text of the artists' writings is fascinating and seems to be translated well, "Formative Meetings," the six-page text about their work, and the only form of introduction, written by Frantisek Dryje, is at once redundant and baroque. Too many contrived words strive to classify the artists' work, using terms such as "neo-cubist," "negativist," and "pseudo-naive iconography." This use of language may be a necessary step to gain acceptance of the artists' work in the international world of "high art." However, the very approach used seems an attempt at elevating the art unnecessarily and perhaps even against the naturalist, unassuming philosophies inherent in the Svankmajers' work. Perhaps the inclusion of this material and the use of English is an effort to produce evidence to the Western world of the Svankmajers' rightful place in the fine art world. If this is what it would take for a full scale touring exhibition of their work to be mounted outside of Eastern Europe, then it is a reasonable expense. Besides, the text lends context to a book that would otherwise be a mere collection of art.

Animation manages to revive the imaginary world of childhood and to give it back its original trustworthiness. - Jan Svankmajer

Overall, the book, like the Svankmajers' work, is an essential volume in any study of fine art animation, and should be included in any library on the subject.

For those natives and travelers lucky enough to be in Prague in the near future, a trip to GAMBRA, the Czech Surrealist Group's gallery, located on the Svankmajers' property at 5 Cerninska Street in Prague, is highly recommended.

There, one can see and purchase all of the catalogs, books and original art, including sculptures, prints and paintings, by Jan Svankmajer, Eva Svankmajerová and other artists in the Czech Surrealist Group.

How to Obtain a Copy

Anima Animus Animation, by Jan Svankmajer and Eva Svankmajerová, Prague, Czech Republic: Slovart Publishers, Ltd. and Arbor Vitae Foundation for Literature and Visual Arts, 1998. 184 pages, illustrated.

Anima Animus Animation is available by mail order from Galerie GAMBRA.

Prices (postage included):

1800 Kc (approx. U.S. \$55) by surface mail

2100 Kc (approx. U.S. \$65) by air mail

Send VISA, Diners Club or JCB credit card information (number and expiration date) to:

Galerie GAMBRA

Cerninska 5

118 00 Praha 1

Czech Republic

Read an interview with Jan Svankmajer in the June 1997 issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

Visit Animation Heaven and Hell for a look at the animated films of Jan Svankmajer.

Wendy Jackson is associate editor of Animation World Magazine. In August, she will give a presentation on Czech animation at the tenth annual Society for Animation Studies Conference.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The Association of Moving Image Artists

by Gregory Lukow

The Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) is the world's largest professional association for film, television and video archivists. More than that, however, the association brings together archivists, producers, historians, film and television documentarians, scholars, and students to create a unique and vital community dedicated to preserving our moving image heritage. For those interested in animated film, it provides a network for dialogue and information exchange with the many North American archivists, in both the public and private sectors, who are responsible for safeguarding and providing access to the animated image in all its forms. These images span the history of animation, from the earliest years of precinema to the classic output of the Hollywood studios, from the pioneers of avant garde film and video animation to the latest work in digital, interactive and special effects technologies, from paper prints to Disney and DreamWorks.

In 1991, the group voted to establish AMIA and formalize itself as an individual-based professional association, the only one of its kind in the moving image archival field.

History

Since the late 1960s, representatives from moving image archives have recognized the value of regular meetings to exchange information and experiences. In the 1970s and 1980s, this group of archivists expanded from a handful of participants to several hundred archivists from scores of national, regional and local institutions. In

1991, the group voted to establish AMIA and formalize itself as an individual-based professional association, the only one of its kind in the moving image archival field.

Currently, AMIA represents over 400 individuals from the United States and Canada. In recent years, AMIA has taken on an international dimension as many archivists from around the world have joined the association. AMIA members are drawn from a broad cross-section of film, television, video and interactive media, including classic and contemporary Hollywood productions, newsreels and documentaries, and national and local television productions, including news, public affairs and entertainment programming. There are also a number of significant specialized collections, including independently produced film and video art, amateur footage, and films and television programs reflecting ethnic and minority experiences.

AMIA Annual Conference

Every fall, AMIA's annual conference holds a premiere place on the calendar of international archival events. The conferences are open to all, regardless of membership in the association. In 1998, AMIA's eighth annual conference will be held in the Fontainebleu Hilton on Miami Beach from December 7-12. The full range of issues involved in collecting, preserving and using archival moving images will be discussed in an ambitious schedule of panels, presentations, workshops, technical symposia, and vendor exhibits. Other events will include the association's annual membership meeting; the fifth annual AMIA awards luncheon; and the immensely popular "AMIA Evening of Archival Screenings," featuring

excerpts from films and television programs recently-acquired or newly-restored by a broad range of archives and producers. Over the years, many rare and rediscovered animation treasures have been shown in these screenings, some for the first time in decades.

Currently, AMIA represents over 400 individuals from the United States and Canada.

AMIA-L, The Organization's On-line Listserv

AMIA's listserv (AMIA-L) is one of the archival communities most dynamic and valuable resources. Using this electronic forum, anyone interested in film and video preservation can post messages and communicate on a daily basis with experts in the field. Every week, a broad range of questions are asked and answered on AMIA-L about such topics as: the rediscovery of lost films, archival holdings, the location of specific collections and footage, new preservation technologies, the life expectancy of digital video formats, case studies in copyright law, the availability of equipment and services, job openings, upcoming conferences and meetings and new publications.

To subscribe to AMIA-L, send the following message to listserv@lsv.uky.edu: SUBSCRIBE AMIA-L Your Name. You will be automatically added to the list and will receive a "welcome" message and further instructions. All mail messages intended for the list members should then be sent to amia-l@lsv.uky.edu.

Activities

AMIA exists to advance the

field and foster cooperation among individuals concerned with the collection, preservation, exhibition and use of moving image materials. The organization promotes standards and practices, stimulates research, and encourages public awareness of moving image preservation. It publishes the quarterly *AMIA Newsletter*, maintains the AMIA web site, and is developing a journal that will combine scholarly and technical approaches to moving image preservation. AMIA also honors the work of film and television archivists through its awards program. Each year AMIA bestows its Silver Light Award in recognition of career achievements, and the Leab Award for important contributions to the field.

AMIA's listserv (AMIA-L) is one of the archival communities most dynamic and valuable resources.

Education and Training

One of AMIA's most important goals is to establish scholarship and internship programs to help educate and train the next generation of moving image archivists. With support from the Mary Pickford Foundation and Sony Pictures, AMIA offers the only scholarship program in North America that supports students pursuing graduate-level studies in moving image preservation and archiving. In addition, AMIA conducts an annual Basic Training Workshop and presents special workshops, forums, and advanced technical symposia, including the "Reel Thing Laboratory Technical Symposium," which discusses recent preservation work.

National Plans

AMIA is heavily involved in the crucial work of developing the national plans for moving image

preservation that have been published in both the United States and Canada in recent years. AMIA delivered testimony before the U.S. Congress in support of the National Film Preservation Act of 1996, and now holds a seat on the National Film Preservation Board. The association is also a member of the Alliance for Canada's Audio-Visual Heritage.

In 1997 AMIA's Board of Directors created a new AMIA Committee on U.S. National Moving Image Preservation Plans. The committee's mandate is to review, prioritize and develop strategies for implementing the many recommendations included in the two U.S. moving image plans published by the Library of Congress: *Redefining Film Preservation* (1994) and *Television and Video Preservation* (1998). The strategies will identify what needs to be done, who should do it, and how much will it cost. They will be forwarded to the Library of Congress, after which AMIA will work with the Library and other organizations to carry out their implementation.

Committees and Interest Groups

AMIA's three membership committees, "Preservation," "Cataloging & Documentation," and "Access," are standing committees established by the membership to develop, promote and facilitate archival related activities. They meet at least once a year during the annual AMIA conference, and are open to all members who agree to participate actively in the work of the committees. AMIA's Interest Groups are affiliation groups created by individual members who share common interests and work together for mutual benefit. They are open to all who wish to participate. Current AMIA Interest Groups are devoted to "News & Documentary Collections," "Inédits" (amateur footage), "Copyright," "Region-

al Archives," and "Digital Archiving." The latter group will be of special interest to animation and special effects professionals interested in the rapidly developing area of "media asset management."

AMIA's listserv (AMIA-L) is one of the archival communities most dynamic and valuable resources.

AMIA Membership

Membership in AMIA is available on a calendar year basis to any interested individual or organization. Members receive the *AMIA Newsletter*; invitations to all AMIA meetings and events; discounted registration fees for AMIA annual conferences; and the benefits of affiliation with the world's leading professional association of moving image archivists. Annual membership dues are U.S. \$50 for individuals, \$150 for non-profit institutions, and \$300 for commercial institutions. Subscriptions to the *AMIA Newsletter* are available to students and libraries at a cost of \$35 per year.

For more information about AMIA, contact the association's office in Beverly Hills, California at (310) 550-1300 or e-mail amia@ix.net-com.com. Membership and annual conference information can be found on AMIA's web site at www.amianet.org.

Gregory Lukow is director of the American Film Institute's National Center for Film and Video Preservation. He has served as AMIA's founding secretary and member of its Board of Directors since 1991.

Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.



NEWS

by Wendy Jackson

Business

MSH Comes Of AGE. MSH Entertainment Corporation, a TV production, music and software development company, has agreed to acquire a majority interest stake in Abrams-Gentile Entertainment (AGE), a New York-based independent producer of children's programming, toys and merchandising properties. The two companies have been working together for two years on the production of the computer-animated TV series, *Van-Pires*, which is now in production on its second season. AGE, which has output more than 150 hours of family programming in the past four years, is most known for its successful toy line and animated series, *Sky Dancers*. MSH, a public company currently listed on the OTC Bulletin Board, is positioning itself to make a formal application for NASDAQ listing. Although the terms of the deal are not being disclosed, the transaction, scheduled to be completed in June, is being referred to as a "merger."

People

Simpsons Voices Settle. All of the major voice actors on *The Simpsons* have renewed their contracts with Twentieth Century Fox to continue their work on the series. The last of the agreements were reached last week, after several weeks of contract negotiations which had four of the actors—Hank Azaria (Apu,

Moe and others), Dan Castellaneta (Homer, Krusty, Barney and others), Harry Shearer (Mr. Burns, Ned Flanders and others) and Yeardley Smith (Lisa)—requesting salaries upwards of \$100,000 per episode and producers poised to re-cast new voices for the animated series. Nancy Cartwright (Bart) and Julie Kavner (Marge and her sisters) had reached prior agreements with Fox. Production, which had been put on hold during negotiations, began immediately with a script reading on April 2 attended by all of the actors and a recording session on April 6 for the 1998 Halloween episode. *Daily Variety* (4/3/98) reported that the cast members' salaries will double to \$50,000 per episode next season (season 10), jump to \$60,000 in season 11 and to \$70,000 in season 12, and that each actor will receive a \$1 million bonus in the year 2005, though its sources for this information were unnamed. Making light of the situation, the most recent episode of *The Simpsons* which aired on Sunday, April 5, opened with an inside joke that may have gotten a laugh from people involved in the show's production, but probably stumped most viewers. In the opening sequence, Bart wrote as his ever-changing "chalkboard gag" phrase, "I will not demand what I'm worth." Was this a comment on the contract negotiations? Fox declined comment. But people involved in the show's pre-production at Film Roman said they knew nothing of



Nancy Cartwright.

this added gag, and that it was most likely planted by one of the producers at Gracie Films who has final approval of the show in post-production.

Musical Chairs. Harvey Entertainment has not renewed its contracts with two of its top executives: chief executive officer (CEO) Jeffrey Montgomery and chief financial officer (CFO) Greg Yulish. Instead, the company has hired former All American Communications CEO **Tony Scotti** and former MGM chief financial officer **Mike Hope** to oversee operations for an interim six month period. It has been reported that Harvey's major shareholders on the board of directors prompted the change of management, for financial reasons. Concurrently, Harvey Entertainment has named **Don Gold** senior vice president of its new Harvey Home Video division, which will release two animated



Mike Judge.

titles this year and three in 1999. Gold was previously senior vice president of sales and marketing at Tri-mark Pictures. . . . Palo Alto, California-based **Pacific Data Images (PDI)** has hired **John Batter** to the newly created position of Chief Financial Officer. He previously held the same post at DreamWorks Interactive where he was part of the start-up management team. Prior to DreamWorks, Batter was CFO for game developer Xatrix Entertainment. Batter's appointment will free up time for PDI founder and president Carl Rosendahl to move into a chairman's position. The company is also searching to fill an additional executive CEO or COO post to assist Rosendahl. In addition, PDI recently promoted **Patty Wooton** to senior vice president of production. . . . Visual effects director **Ric Ostiguy**, animation director **Gunnar Hansen**, animator **Alexandre Lafortune** and executive producer **Mario Doucet** have formed **Voodoo Arts**, a new digital production studio in Montreal, Canada. All previously worked for Santa Monica, California-based Buzz Image Group (now part of POP). . . . **Robyn Miller**, co-creator of the CD-ROM game *Myst* and its sequel, *Riven*, is leaving Cyan, the company he founded with

his brother Rand Miller, to launch a film development company called Land of Point. . . . Ridefilm producer **Ellen Coss** (*Race to Atlantis*, *Star Trek: The Experience*), has left Rhythm & Hues to form her own company with director **Mario Kamberg** (*The Fantastic World of Hanna-Barbera*, *Seafari*, *Star Trek: The Experience*). The new company, **Escape Artists, Inc.** will focus on ridefilms as well as mainstream theme park work such as attraction development, but will not be a closed production entity. "I would love to give work to Rhythm & Hues," said Coss, who worked at R&H for over five years and maintains a working relationship with the company. . . . Producer **Kristina Reed** also recently exited Rhythm & Hues to join Disney-owned effects studio **Dreamquest Images**. She is now working as a digital producer on the live-action feature film, **Inspector Gadget**. . . . *King of the Hill* writers **Alan Cohen** and **Alan Freedland**, along with the show's co-creator, **Mike Judge** have sold a pitch to Twentieth Century Fox for a live-action feature film called *Lost in Duncanville*. Mike Judge, who has a first look film and TV deal with Fox, will supervise development of, produce and may direct *Duncanville*. Judge is currently directing

a live-action feature spin-off of his independently animated short, *Office Space* for Fox. Previously he directed the series and animated feature versions of the property he created, *Beavis and Butt-Head* for MTV. . . . New York-based visual effects/post-production company **Manhattan Transfer** has hired **David Isyomin** as visual effects supervisor. Isyomin previously held the same position at Digital Domain in Venice, California and also worked at R/Greenberg & Associates. . . . **Chris Robinson**, director of the Ottawa International Animation Festival (OIAF) has recently added an editorial role to his slate. He will be the editor of *FPS*, a Canadian print magazine about animation which was previously edited by Emru Townsend. **Kelly Neall**, a past co-director of OIAF, will be associate editor. *FPS* expects to print quarterly issues starting in fall 1998. . . . **NELVANA Enterprises** in Toronto has named **Sean Murch** director of Canadian Sales & Distribution. He was previously director of development at Natterjack Animation in Vancouver, and his background includes stints with Radical Entertainment and Red Rover Film Company. . . . New York and San Francisco-based commercial studio **Curious Pictures** has added five



The Voodoo Arts creative team. © Voodoo Arts.

new designer/directors to its roster:

Sylvain Chomet is best known for his award-winning and Oscar-nominated animated short film, *The Old Lady and the Pigeons* and his career to date includes animating at U.K. studios Richard Purdum Productions and Tandem Films; **Andy Knight** and **Linzi Knight** co-founded Toronto-based Red Rover Studios (Andy recently directed *Beauty and the Beast: The Enchanted Christmas* for Disney, and is also the creator of the Fox/NELVANA animated series, *Ned's Newt*); **Joan Raspo** has worked for VH1 and Two Headed Monster; and **Susan Smith** is creative director at WIG, the graphics arm of Western Images in San Francisco. She will remain in this position while directing commercials for Curious. . . . New York-based broadcast design firm **Lee Hunt Associates (LHA)** has added two new executive producers to its staff. **Kate Cestar**, formerly a producer at Fox Broadcasting, f/X Networks and Comedy Central, will be executive producer of Promos and **Caarin Fleischmann**, formerly of Crossroads Communications, will be executive producer of Long Form for LHA. . . . San Francisco-based effects and animation house, **Tippett Studio** has hired two new people to expand its feature film ros-



It's Tough to be a Bug at Animal Kingdom. © 1998 The Walt Disney Company.

ter. **Rose Duignan**, who will join Tippett as marketing director, was most recently development/management/marketing consultant for Rhythm & Hues in Los Angeles. Her background also includes work at ILM and Danger Productions (*Bump in the Night*). Joining Tippett as visual effects supervisor is **Bruce Nicholson**, whose background includes visual effects directing and supervising on *Star Wars Trilogy Special Edition*, *Special Effects (IMAX)*, and more than 30 other films and commercials. . . .

Klasky Csupo has named **Vicki Ariyasu** director of development.

In this position she will oversee the development of all new television and feature film projects. Ariyasu was most recently executive vice president of Bagdasarian Productions, and previously worked at Caravan Pictures and Amblin Television. She also owns and operates an independent consulting firm called

Data Wranglers, whose clients include The Disney Channel, Miramax and HBO. . . . San Francisco-based studio, **Radium** has hired CGI artists **Agata Bolska**, formerly of Xaos, and recent Academy of Arts graduate **Debra Santosa** to work on 3-D computer animation for commercials and feature films.

Places

Disney Animates Animals. Disney's new theme park, Animal Kingdom, opened in Orlando, Florida on April 22. The 500-acre park features live animals, rides, and a few attractions which utilize animation. *It's Tough to be a Bug*, a show that takes place in a 430-seat theater inside a giant tree, combines 3-D computer animation with animatronic characters. Viewers wear "bug-eye" polarized glasses to view the animation, which was produced by Disney and Rhythm & Hues in association with Pixar, which is currently in production on the CGI animated feature, *A Bug's Life*. An adventure ride called *Count-*



CGI artists **Agata Bolska** and **Debra Santosa** joined San Francisco-based studio, **Radium**. Photos courtesy of Radium.



The mysterious Quay Brothers.

down to Extinction features animated visual effects and animatronic dinosaurs. The park also features stage shows based on Disney's animated features: *Festival of the Lion King*, *Colors of the Wind*, *Friends From the Animal Forest*, and *Journey Into Jungle Book*.

Animation World Magazine will feature an inside look at Animal Kingdom in an upcoming issue. Stay tuned to the *Animation Flash* for details.

Films

Quays New Film In The Works.

The Brothers Quay, the London-based twin brother directing duo known for their dark, bizarre puppet animated films (*Street of Crocodiles*, *Epic of Gilgamesh*), are developing a feature length film with producer Keith Griffiths and his company, Koninck. Tentatively titled *The Mechanical Infantata*, the film has been developed for Film 4. Koninck is currently seeking co-production partners and hopes the film will go into production in Europe during the Spring of 1999. Polish composer Lech Jankowski is set to score the film and preliminary casting is underway. The Brothers Quay made a departure from animated shorts with their first live-action feature, *Institute Benjamenta* in 1995. Lech Jankowski's film score from

"Institute Benjamenta" will be available in May, via mail order from Koninck, 19-20 Rheidol Mews, Rheidol Terrace, London N18NU, U.K.

Spike & Mike Fest. No, it's not "sick and twisted." It's *Spike & Mike's 1998 Classic Festival of Animation*, which opened on April 10 at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco, California. The program includes Pixar's Oscar-winning short, *Geri's Game*, Piet Kroon's *T.R.A.N.S.I.T.*, Aardman's *Stage Fright*, Lasse Persson's *Hand in Hand*, Ben Gluck's *Man's Best Friend*, Berad Beyreuther, Daniel Binder and Robert A. Zwirner's *Güten Appetit*, Don Hertzfeldt's *Lily and Jim*, Blair Thornley's *Underwear Stories*, Rob Breyne, Nico Meulemans and Lef Goosen's *Museum*, Silke Parzich's *Spring*, Zlatin Radev's *Shock* and Alexei Karaev's *Welcome*. The show is also booked at San Francisco's Palace of Fine Arts (April 24-May 9), and elsewhere in California, in Spike and Mike's home town of La Jolla (April 3-June 13), Landmark's UC Theater in Berkeley (April 17-26), the Towne Theater in San Jose (April 24-May 14), The Lark Theater in Larkspur (May 15-28), Stanford University in Palo Alto (May 14-23), Lakeside Cinemas in Santa Rosa (May 29-June 4) and theaters in Sonoma (June 26-July 2), and in Los Angeles (July 3-9) and Orange County (July 17-23). Additional confirmed showings are slated for Austin, Texas (June 26-July 16), Louisville, Kentucky (June 26-July 9), Kansas City, Missouri (July 3-9), Lexington, Kentucky (July 17-30), Atlanta, Georgia (August 7-13), Charleston, South Carolina (August 21-27), and in Canada at the Ridge

Theatre in Vancouver (April 17-May 10) and the Roxy Theatre in Victoria (May 15-21).

Prince Of Egypt Making Religious Rounds.

When you make a film based on the bible, the public's perception of its content cannot be taken lightly. That's why DreamWorks co-founder Jeffrey Katzenberg is screening the film to religious leaders around the world. On a recent trip to Europe, Katzenberg presented the film to 68 cardinals and officials at the Vatican, and to Moslem clerics, Jewish rabbis and the Anglican Archbishop of Lambeth, sources inside the company say. Although the Pope himself was unable to attend the Vatican screening, he is expected to see the film in May. Sources say the trip was a "great success," but DreamWorks declined further comment. *Prince of Egypt* is expected to wrap production in July, and will open in U.S. theaters on December 18, 1998.

Disney, DIC Extend Live-Action Deal.

Animated characters such as Sailor Moon, Inspector Gadget and Carmen Sandiego are making moves into live-action features, through a recently renewed first-look deal between Walt Disney Pictures and DIC Entertainment's DIC Films division. *Inspector Gadget*, a live-action feature based on the 1980s animated series about a bumbling detective, is slated for release in summer 1999. Projects in development include: *Sailor Moon*, based on the Japanese animated series/merchandising property and set to star actress Geena Davis, and *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?*, produced in association with Sandra Bullock and her com-

pany, Fortis Films. DIC Films' first live-action feature with Disney, *Meet the Deedles* opened in April in U.S. theaters. In late March, DIC announced the formation of a direct-to-video animation division, which will produce an animated *Inspector Gadget* video.

Television

Toon Disney Launch.

Disney/ABC Networks' new U.S. cable network, Toon Disney, launched on April 18 to an audience of nearly five million basic cable subscribers nationwide who have digital service from DirecTV, Marcus Cable and direct broadcast satellite service EchoStar. In the coming months, Toon Disney will be added to expanded basic cable line-ups being offered by Century Communications, Rivkin & Associates, Galaxy Cable, Classic Cable, Coaxial Communications and Americast, expanding the audience to about six million. Initially the network will not be supported by advertising, but by Disney, who will actually pay cable operators to carry the channel on basic service to reach more subscribers. As the subscriber base increases, this will be balanced out by license fees which will be paid to Disney by the cable operators. The 24-hour, all-animation channel will showcase animation from the Disney library of more than 2,000 series episodes as well as shorts, specials and features produced in the past seven decades. Programming started on a Saturday



at 3:00 p.m. ET/12:00 p.m. PT with *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (1940) and other classic Mickey Mouse shorts. At 7:00 p.m. ET the channel's nightly prime time block, "The Magical World of Toons," will debut. "Magical World" showcases shorts and series themed around Disney characters such as Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofy and Pluto. On Friday nights, the show features animated features, many of which were produced for the home video market, such as *The Return of Jafar*, as well as theatrical releases such as *A Goofy Movie*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Brave Little Toaster*. The majority of the daytime and late night slots are programmed with blocks of series owned by Disney/ABC, such as *Gummi Bears*, *Bump in the Night*, *Jungle Cubs*, *Bonkers*, *The Littles*, *Gadget Boy*, *Marsupilami*, *Madeleine*, *Quack Attack*, *Goof Troop*, *TaleSpin*, and *Darkwing Duck*. Roughly half of these series are shared with sister network, The Disney Channel, which turned 15

years old when Toon Disney launched on April 18.

UPN To Air Disney Block.

Viacom-owned cable network UPN has reached an agreement with Buena Vista Television to broadcast Disney animated children's programming. Starting in fall 1999, UPN will air a two-hour block of syndicated, Disney-branded shows which is most likely to include programs from the "Disney's One Saturday Morning" block which currently airs on ABC: *Disney's Recess*, *Disney's Doug*, *Disney's Pepper Ann* and *Disney's Hercules*. Kellogg's, which

sponsored the "Disney Afternoon" syndicated program block, will retain its primary sponsorship role as the programming moves to UPN. Buena Vista will sell the block in territories which are not reached by UPN affiliates. Advertising time will be split between the two companies. This deal closes over two months of negotiations in which UPN was also talking to Nickelodeon about a similar kids programming deal. "Children's programming has long been a significant priority for me," said UPN CEO Dean Valentine, "This exemplifies our plan to aggressively attract the mainstream television audience to watch UPN and it's a giant step in our growth as a broadcast network." Valentine was actually involved in the development of several of these Disney shows when he was president of Walt Disney Television and Television Animation before being hired away as CEO of UPN in September 1997.

Groening Going To *Futurama*. Fox Broadcasting Co. has ordered 13 episodes of *Futurama*, a new, prime time animated series developed by Matt Groening, creator of *The Simpsons*. The comedy series is slated to debut on the Fox TV network some time in 1999. It will be produced by Twentieth Century Fox in association with Groening's Curiosity Company. Groening will be executive producer and the show runner will be David Cohen, who has been a writer on *The Simpsons* for five years. Rough Draft Animation, a studio based in Los Angeles and Korea, which does production work on *The Simpsons*, has been tentatively selected as the sole production company. Employees of Film Roman, the U.S. animation studio which currently does *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill* for Fox, were informed last week that they would not be working on *Futurama*.

Celebrity Death Match, one of the animated properties which launched as an animated short on MTV's "Cartoon Sushi," will be the first to debut as a weekly series on May 14. Created by Eric Fogel, an NYU Animation graduate who also created the MTV series, *The Head*, *Celebrity Death Match* is a clay-animated sketch show which parodies celebrities and public figures by pitting them against each other in WWF wrestling-style fights. Coinciding with the final episode of the NBC sitcom, *Seinfeld*, the premiere episode of *Celebrity Death Match* will include caricatures of *Seinfeld* battling with *Home Improvement* star Tim Allen. A total of thirteen half-hour episodes have been commissioned by MTV, and will include



The animated series, *Recess* will be included in a Disney-branded program block on UPN. © Disney.

such battles as "Hillary Clinton vs. Monica Lewinsky" and "Letterman vs. Leno." The show is filmed in MTV's New York studio with a digital camera system, which enables animators to work and edit quickly, without waiting for film processing. This digital camera system, which uses Macintosh computers, was developed by supervising animator Greg Pair, of AMPnyc Animation. Creator/director Eric Fogel said this technique allows for the fast turnaround needed to be able to produce a show that pokes fun at current events. Fogel also plans to make a stop-motion animated feature film of his thesis film, *Mutilator*, which is currently featured in *General Chaos*, Manga Entertainment's theatrical compilation of animated shorts.

Kids Upfront Moved Ahead. Usually by this time of the year, U.S. TV and cable networks have sold most of their advance advertising time

slots, following the advertisers' buying spree induced by the announcement of network programming line-ups for the 1998/99 season. But this year, the ad buying period referred to in the industry as the "kids upfront" advertising market, was postponed until the end of April. The networks have announced their programming, but the advertisers aren't buying yet. One of the reasons for this is that the upcoming August 1998 launch of Saban/News Corp.'s new cable network, The Fox Family Channel, will give advertisers (and kids) an additional seven days a week of kids programming to choose from, on top of what's already being offered by Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, Kids WB!, Fox Children's Network, ABC, The Disney Channel and now the new, commercial-free animation network Toon Disney. The increase in kids programming outlets as well as other distractions such as computers, sports and video games, is

spreading kid audiences thin, and lowering ratings, thereby delivering fewer viewers for each advertising slot. Plus, more kids' fare is being introduced later this year with the launch of Pax Net in August and CBS' return to Saturday morning in the fall. The future also holds the possibility of new family-oriented channels from HBO and The Jim Henson Company. Nickelodeon beat other broadcasters to the punch in 1995 and 1997 by pre-selling advertising for two-year blocks, so many of the biggest kids' advertisers—such as cereal, toy and fast food companies—already have half of their 98/99 ad budgets committed. Meanwhile, other networks will have to wait for the kids upfront market to get started as buyers wait to see what this season's going prices are. The buying frenzy usually lasts only a day or two after a major buyer sets a deal with one or more of the networks.

For further reading on this subject, delve into AWN's September 1997 issue and read Buzz Potamkin's article, "The Cost of Eyeballs: Advertising Dollars & TV."

News From MIP. The MIP TV market took place April 3-8, 1998 in Cannes, France. *Animation World Magazine* also has a full review in this issue, but here we'll report the latest deals and breaking news. Saban/News corp. co-venture Fox Kids Worldwide announced the expansion of **Fox Kids Europe** with the launch this month of three new programming blocks in Spain, Scandinavia and Poland. Fox Kids Europe managing director Ynon Kreiz said the company aims to launch Fox Kids programming in every country in Europe, and will

add at least two more networks in Europe by the end of the year. . . . The French network FRANCE 3 has signed a deal with **Nickelodeon** to air the entire library of *Rugrats* episodes. . . . U.K.-based **Polygram Visual Programming** has made a deal with Walker Books to produce 13 half hours of an animated series based on the "Maisy" books by Lucy Cousins. The series has been pre-sold to Nickelodeon in the U.S. and ITV in the U.K. . . . **VARGA tv** has signed a co-production deal with **Link Entertainment** for *Preston Pig*, based on a book by Colin McNaughton. Link will handle worldwide licensing and distribution for the series. . . . **Ellipseanime**, a subsidiary of French broadcaster CANAL +, announced plans to produce one animated feature film every two years and to double its TV production output to eight series by the year 2000. The first features will be *Babar* (with NELVANA and Trickompany) in 1999 and *Bécasine* in 2000. Ellipseanime's upcoming new TV series include *Fantomette*, *Ixcalibur*, *Pirate Family*, *Cairo Cops*, *Agrippine*, *The Busters* and *Frog*.

DIC Pacts With PAX. Disney-owned DIC Entertainment will provide five hours of animation programming a week to Paxson Communications' new U.S. family entertainment network, Pax Net. An exclusive, two year agreement reached between the two companies names DIC as the sole provider of children's programming for the television network group, which will launch on August 31, 1998. Much of the programming will be from DIC's existing animation library, packaged as an educational program

block called "Freddy's Firehouse," which will air for three hours on Saturday and two hours on Sunday. In addition to airing on Pax Net, "Freddy's Firehouse" will also be sold internationally as an independent formatted package. Distribution is being handled by Disney arm, Buena Vista International.

TV Summit Supports Co-Production. At the second World Summit on Television for Children, held recently in London, broadcasters, producers and educators from 81 countries gathered to exchange ideas. A common concern was that children worldwide are experiencing a globalization of culture and an erosion of cultural diversity. The World Summit is now overseeing what is believed to be the largest co-production in the world: a television series called *Animated Tales of the World*. Co-producers from 26 different countries will each produce a story from their culture and animate it in a style consistent with that culture. The result will be 26 short animated films, or 13 half-hour episodes in all, by April 2000. It is hoped that an additional block of 13 episodes will be created each year. Co-producers in 20 countries have confirmed their participation thus far and 17 additional countries are expected to commit for the first and second seasons. The total budget for the first 26 films is U.K. £5.2 million. Financing for individual films will be on a sliding scale factoring market share and value; industrialized countries will pay more than developing countries. All equity, distribution advances and future revenue will be held by and used to fund The World Summit on Television for Children. Combined, broad-

cast territories and satellite partners will air the series in 80 countries and 27 languages. The project will provide work for more than 2,000 people over three years. Chris Grace, director of animation at S4C in Wales, initiated the project in fall 1997 while preparing a session on co-production for the World Summit. The concept is consistent with S4C, BBC and Channel 4's previous animation co-productions such as *Shakespeare-The Animated Tales*, *Operavox*, *Testament-The Bible in Animation* and *Animated World Faiths*.

Confirmed production partners for *Animated Tales of the World* are: CBC/TFO (Canada), HBO (U.S.A.), Discovery Kids (Latin America), Channel 11 (Mexico), SABC (South Africa), TVB (Burkina Faso, Africa), TVP (Poland), KRO (Holland), La Cinquième (France), Channel 4 (England), S4C (Wales and Russia), T na G/RTE (Ireland), PTV (Pakistan), S4C (China), TCS (Singapore and Malaysia), NRTV (Nauru), SBS (Australia), NZTV (New Zealand) and ART (Gulf States, Middle East). Additional countries which are expected to commit include Brazil, Israel, Korea, Japan, Latvia, Slovakia and others.

Bohbot Syndicating Second Kids Net. Bohbot Entertainment & Media is launching a second syndication network in September 1998. BKN Kids II will offer programming to stations not granted an affiliation to The BKN Kids Network, Bohbot's first syndication network launched in September 1997. "In certain top 50 markets, we had several offers from stations to become our affiliate," said John Hess, Bohbot's senior vice president of affiliate station

sales. "We created a second feed to satisfy this demand." Station groups which have already signed for a BKN II affiliation include Sinclair, Tribune, Clear Channel and Acme. "All BKN I stations will still receive Syndex protection as the shows will be totally different," added research manager Marci Cohen. The BKN II lineup will include Bohbot's library series, "Mighty Max," "Highlander-The Animated Series," "The Mask-The Animated Series," and "Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog."

CN Surveys Euro Kids. Cartoon Network U.K. and Continental Research recently conducted a survey of 2,250 European kids aged 5-11, that comprise their viewing audiences in the U.K., Netherlands, Sweden, Spain, Hungary and Poland. An average of 39% of kids surveyed have a television in their bedroom (60% in England!). Polish kids have the highest readership of magazines, comics and newspapers. Spanish kids read the least, but watch the most home videos (averaging 2-3 per week). Personal computers at home are highest among kids in Holland (69%), but Sweden has the highest percentage of Internet-using kids (34%). Asked which parental traits they were most annoyed by, the kids gave top votes to smoking and nagging.

Castle May Rock In Prime Time. Castle Rock Entertainment has sold an animated series pitch to Warner Bros.' television network, The WB, and is currently developing the property for possible debut in a prime time slot on the U.S. network in late 1998 or early 1999. The untitled series was created by Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein, former pro-

ducers of *The Simpsons*. If green lit for production, Oakley and Weinstein will be the series' executive producers. The show revolves around and is aimed at the young adult demographic, and features a pair of brothers living in New York City. Glenn Padnick, president of Castle Rock's Television unit, said this is the first animated series to be developed by the company, whose live-action credits include *Seinfeld*.

Dexter Plot by Devoted Tot. A story idea submitted to Hanna-Barbera by a young viewer was adapted as a seven-minute episode of *Dexter's Laboratory* and aired on Cartoon Network on April 29, 1998. Seven-year-old Tyler Samuel Lee of Long Island, New York sent in an audio tape of his original story idea (complete with believable Dexter voice impersonations!) at the encouragement of his mother, whose voice is also featured on the tape. Series creator/director Gendy Tartakovsky liked it so much, he is using the unedited tape as the actual narration and voice over for the 50th episode of *Dexter's Laboratory*. The episode, titled "Dexter and Computress Get Mandark" is animated in the style of a second-grader, with crayon-colored backgrounds and crudely-drawn characters. Lee was compensated for his contribution, but fans need not rush in with their story ideas. The show's producers say the cooperation with Lee was a one in a million fluke. "We get lots of letters and comments from fans, but Tyler's tape just floored us," said Tartakovsky. "His story demonstrated a great understanding of the show and genuinely captured the imaginative kid perspective we're always striving for."



Seven year-old Tyler Samuel Lee devised the concept and voice track of the 50th episode of *Dexter's Laboratory*. Photo courtesy of Cartoon Network.

Dexter's Laboratory debuted on Cartoon Network in 1996 and was the network's highest-rated series in 1996 and 1997.

Commercials

Spotlight.Acme Filmworks director **Bill Plympton** created two animated PSAs as part of a literacy campaign sponsored by 7-Eleven. The two 15-second spots will air as bumpers on the PBS series *Wishbone*. The agency was The Richards Group in Dallas, Texas, and the producer was Diana Lawless. . . . Another Acme director, **Bill Kroy-**



Flea Circus' opener for *Toons From Planet Orange*. © Nickelodeon.

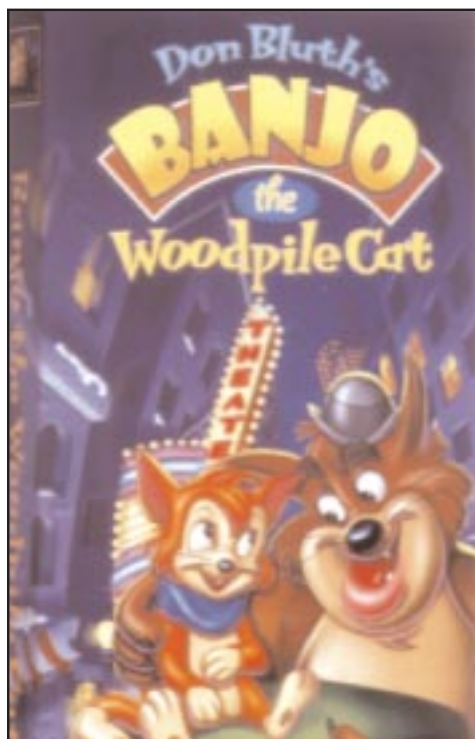
er created a bumper campaign for Cartoon Network. Titled *Mouse Hole, Hospital, Taxi, Night City, Factory* and *Circus*, the six ten-second network ids and five five-second bumpers blend 1950s-influenced graphic art direction combined with computer-enhanced choreography and digital compositing. Post-production was handled by Virtual Magic **Acme Filmworks** also produced a commercial for Tenet Health System, directed by Barrie Nelson. The 30-second spot utilizes 2-D, cel-style animation. Virtual Magic handled digital ink and paint and compositing. The agency was Big Imagination Group in Los Angeles. . . New York-based **The InkTank** created its third and fourth 30-second commercials for Phoenix Insurance Investments, through Emmerling Post Advertising. *Basketball* and *Varsity*, directed by Tissa David, depict animated letters of the company's logo, *Fiscal Fitness*. Digital ink and paint was done on an Animo system by Tapehouse Ink and Paint in New York. . . . Minneapolis, Minnesota-based **Lamb & Company** created a virtual version of actor Alan Alda, to appear on the documentary series, *Scientific American Frontiers*.

The character was created by scanning the actor's head at Viewpoint Datalabs. Animators at Lamb & Company then used Smirk facial animation technology to create 45 seconds of animation which was blended with live-action using Flame. . . . New Zealand-based **Flea Circus**, represented in

the U.S. by **Curious Pictures**, created a seven and four second bumper for Nickelodeon's *Toons From Planet Orange*, a program showcasing animation from around the world. The director was John Robertson and computer animation was handled by **Giant** in Auckland. The bumper spots aired as promos on April 15 but the show will premiere on Nickelodeon this summer New York-based **Curious Pictures** also produced a series of commercials for the Ad Council and the Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities, through the agency DDB Needham. The two 30-second and two 15-second spots combine live-action with 3-D computer animation by David Kelley and Liz De Luna **Curious Pictures'** director Steve Oakes created three 15-second spots for TCG Communications which combine live-action and animation. *Balloon, Sand Castle* and *Butterfly* use stop-motion and replacement animation as well as 2-D computer animation and morphing. The stop-motion animator was Ellen Goldstein. . . . **Manhattan Transfer** also created 2-D and 3-D visual effects for two 15-second commercials for the agency Weiss, Whitten, Stagliano and their client



Most Wanted. © Manhattan Transfer.



Don Bluth and Gary Goldman's first independent animated film, *Banjo the Woodpile Cat*. Images courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.

Barnes & Noble's Internet Bookstore. 3-D animator Keith Stichweh utilized Softimage to create an animated globe and text for the spots, titled *Orbit and Asteroids*. . . . Boston-based **Olive Jar Studios** created stop motion animation and New York-based **Manhattan Transfer** created visual effects for a 30-second spot for Saatchi & Saatchi and their client Pepperidge Farm, promoting Flavor Blasted Goldfish. The stop-motion commercial, titled *Most Wanted*, was brought to life in clay by animation director Richard Zimmerman and animator Jeff Sias. . . . Los Angeles-based **Click 3X** created four computer animated commercials for Stone & Ward Advertising's client, Terminix. The 30-second spots were created in five weeks. Credits include director of animation Jamee Houk, director of CG Steve Martino and Flame artist Darin Fong. . . . London-based **Sherbet** created two ten-second spots for the National Aquarium in Baltimore,

Maryland, U.S.A. The campaign, titled "Venom-Striking Beauties," was created by director Jonathan Hodgson, who filmed watercolor paintings on white paper, then used the film negative rather than the print, to achieve a dark, atmospheric look. . . . Santa Fe, New Mexico-based **Flamdoodle Animation** created a 30-second spot for the Nevada Office of Traffic Safety. Director Jeff LaFlamme used Animo, Photoshop and Painter software to create the animation. . . . **Flamdoodle** also created a five-second bumper for Eye Care of New Mexico, using Animo and Lightwave software, and a six-second bumper for Ohkay Casino, using Animo and Photoshop. . . .

Home Video

Fox Will Play Goldman & Bluth's *Banjo*. Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment will make a video release of Don Bluth and Gary

Goldman's first independent animated film, *Banjo the Woodpile Cat*, available for U.S.\$9.98 (Canadian \$11.98) starting May 5, 1998. The 29-minute film, depicting the story of a young cat who runs away to the big city in search of adventure, was created in the late 1970s, just before the directing duo left Disney to create their own animated features (*The Secret of NIMH*, *An American Tail*, et al.). Bluth and Goldman are now on staff at Fox Animation Studios in Phoenix, where they directed *Anastasia*, which was released on video April 28.

For background information on Don Bluth, visit Jerry Beck's article, "Don Bluth Goes Independent" in the June 1996 issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

South Park's On Warner Video. The first official, commercially produced videos of the animated series, *South Park* will be released



South Park, created by Trey Parker and Matt Stone.
© Comedy Central.

on May 5, by Warner Home Video, through a licensing arrangement with Rhino Home Video. The three tapes will contain the series' first six episodes, complete with close-captioning: "Cartman Gets an Anal Probe," "Volcano," "Weight Gain 4000," "Big Gay Al's Big Gay Boat Ride," "An Elephant Makes Love to a Pig" and "Death." Also included are exclusive "fireside chat" interview sequences with the show's creator/directors, Matt Stone and Trey Parker. However, Stone and Parker opted not to include on the tapes *The Spirit of Christmas*, the infamous animated short that spawned the *South Park* series. Fans will have to continue downloading that one off the Internet and trading bootleg tapes. Each volume is priced at \$14.95 and is labeled with a TV-MA rating and consumer warning label. Some may wonder: Why is the video being released by Warner Bros.? The series is owned by Comedy Central, which is owned by Comedy Partners, a joint venture of Time Warner Entertainment and Viacom.

Have you ever wondered what Matt Stone and Trey Parker's favorite films are? Check out their top ten pick lists in the September 1997 edition of "The Desert Island Series" in *Animation World Magazine*.

zine.

Fox Kids Delivers Cheap Vids.

Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment is flooding the kids home video market with eight new releases priced at U.S. \$5.98 (Canadian \$7.98) each. The titles being released on April 7 are re-releases of the TV series episodes and vault films: *The Adventures of Raggedy Ann*

& *Andy: The Mabbit Adventure*, *Bobby's World: Roger 'n Me*, *Cinderella*, *Life With Louie: For Pete's Sake*, *Life With Louie: The Masked Chess Boy*, *Snow White* and *The Tick: The Tick vs. Arthur*. In July, Fox Kids will debut a line of pre-packed, in-store standing displays with additional short animated videos ranging in price from \$5.98 to \$9.98 each, like: Dr. Seuss sing-along titles *The Cat in the Hat*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, *The Hoober-Bloob Highway*, *The Lorax*, *Grinch Night*, *The Grinch* *Grinches the Cat in the Hat* and *Pontoffel Pock & His Magic Piano*, as well as *Spider-Man*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Iron Man*, *The Fantastic Four*, *Garfield* and *Where's Waldo?*

Why this growth in the home video market? Read our extensive coverage on this aspect of the industry in the November 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

Technology

Tools OfThe Trade. Following the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention in Las Vegas, technology announcements abound. Video software company **Play Incorporated** merged with 3-D animation software company

Electric Image, Inc. The two privately-owned companies have "known each other for more than a decade," said Electric Image co-founder Jay Roth. Under the name Electric Image, the expanded company intends to create "a new breed of graphics and video products with unparalleled capabilities." . . .

Alias/Wavefront unveiled the Windows NT version of their new, next generation animation software, Maya. While the IRIX/Silicon Graphics-compatible version debuted in January, the Windows NT version is slated for a June release. Read a review of Maya in the February 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* . . . **MEDIALAB Studio**

LA is using Softimage's Toon Shader software to get a traditional 2-D look from their real-time motion capture system, CLOVIS. The use of Toon Shader enables Medialab to create 3-D characters with outlines like traditional cel animation, yet retain their computed shadows, camera angles and lighting set-ups. The technology is being used in Medialab's Paris studio for the production of an original animated series pilot called *Sphinx*. Get the inside scoop on Medialab in the February 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* . . . **Kinetix** and

Discreet Logic have formed a partnership to jointly develop and market software combining their respective specialties in 3-D modeling/visual effects/animation and editing/post/digital media production. At NAB, the two companies showcased new integration between their software products: Kinetix's 3D StudioMax R2.5 and Discreet Logic's Effect and Paint programs. . . . Chicago-based game producer TerraGlyph Interactive Stu-

dios has selected **MediaPEGS'** PEGS 2-D animation software as part of its digital animation production system. . . . **TCLai Enterprises** is developing a product called Shooter, a Macintosh software package which enables one to shoot frame by frame film from a computer monitor, synchronizing the display with the camera mechanism. Originally developed for use by the UCLA Animation Workshop, Shooter is not yet available to the public . . . **Newtek** is offering an upgrade of their 3-D animation software NewTek 3D 5.6, free to registered users of LightWave 3D 5.5. The upgrade features HyperVoxels, a rendering technology for simplifying the creation of organic effects, and Steamer Shader, which calculates accurate shadows, refractions and reflections in LightWave 3D. . . . Israel-headquartered company, **Techimage, Ltd.** intends to enter the 3-D animation software market with the release of a new facial animation software package in the near future. . . .

Call for Entries

Women's Films Wanted.

The Feminale, a festival in Cologne, Germany, is seeking entries for its ninth edition, October 1-6, 1998. The program has five categories, including Animation. Entry forms are being accepted until June 1, 1998. For information, contact feminale@t-online.de.

Comics Conference. The Sixth Annual Comic Arts Conference is accepting

papers to be presented at a joint meeting of comics scholars and professionals in San Diego, California during the Comic-Con International, August 13 - 16, 1998. Faculty, students, and those outside the university community are encouraged to make submissions for papers and sessions which take a critical or historical perspective on comics, comic strips, comic books, woodcut novels, etc. Please note, editorial cartoons, caricatures, and animated cartoons are not within the scope of this conference. A 100 to 200 word abstract was requested by April 24, 1998, however, interested people should contact duncanr@holly.hsu.edu if they are interested but were unable to make the deadline.

Chicago Kid's Fest. The Chicago International Children's Film Festival is accepting entries of animated and live-action works for its 15th edition, which will take place at Facets Multimedia's theaters, October 15-25, 1998. The competition includes six animation categories for feature, short and kid-produced films and videos. The deadline for submissions

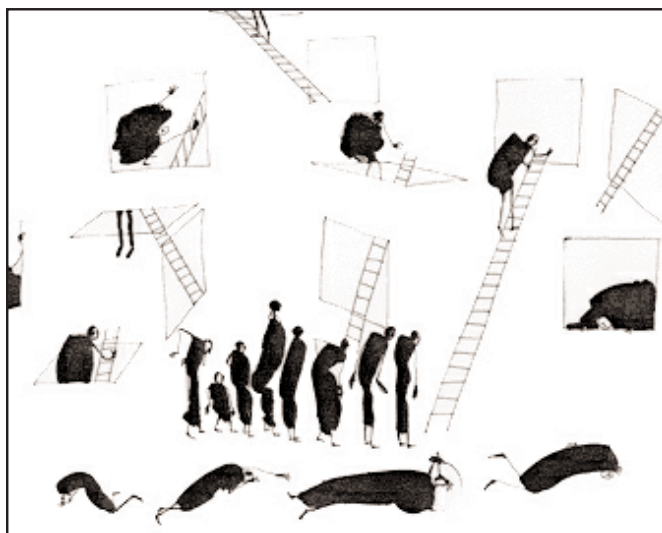
is May 29 and entry fees range from U.S.\$35 to \$75 depending upon length. For entry forms and information, call (773) 281-9075.

MTV Offering Student Rewards.

As a way to bolster development and recruiting efforts, MTV Animation is offering student animators award money for excellence in animation. To qualify for the competition, students must currently be enrolled in a U.S. university as a junior or senior undergraduate student, and must send in a completed animated film by June 8, 1998. MTV will award \$750 to the selected junior films, and \$1500 to the senior films which exhibit the best creativity, originality and competency. Selected films will not be aired on or used commercially by MTV without separate agreement. For rules, regulations and entry forms, send your address by e-mail to kellmanj@mtvn37.viacom.com

The Humanitas Prize. April 15 was the deadline to send in animation scripts for the 1998 Humanitas Prize recognizing "humanizing achievement in television and feature film writing."

A total of \$125,000 is given to writers whose produced works best enrich their audience. Engraved trophies are also awarded to the winning show's producer, director, story editor, production company and network. The 1997 prize in the "Animation for Children" category went to Alex Taub for *The Thank-You Note*, an episode of *Life With Louie* for Fox Kids Network. There is no entry fee and no limit



German animator Raimund Krumme's films will be showcased at Metamorfozi '98 this month. © Raimund Krumm

to the number of scripts submitted by one person. Call (310) 454-8769 for an application for next year!

Events

Metamorfosi. The Goethe Institute will present a non-competitive animation festival called Metamorfosi, May 11-15, 1998 in Rome, Italy. The event will feature films, seminars, meetings and exhibitions on animation from different countries. Animators whose work will be showcased include Giannini & Luzzati (Italy), Raimund Krumme (Germany), Phil Mulloy (U.K.) and Jan Lenica (Poland). For information, contact mc1983@mlink.it or visit www.goethe.de/it/rom.

NATPE Cancels ANIFX. The National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE) has canceled its second annual Animation & Special Effects Expo (ANIFX), which was scheduled to take place in Los Angeles, May 8-11, 1998. NATPE officials cited low pre-registration numbers as the reason for the event's cancellation, which could have been a result of the increase of animation-focused events such as the World Animation Celebration and the now-annual Annecy Animation festival. NATPE had already significantly downsized ANIFX from its first year in the Los Angeles Convention Center by eliminating the exhibition floor, focusing more on seminars and placing the event in a local hotel. NATPE intends to schedule a one-day animation event or lecture series later this year.

3D Design Show. The third annual 3D Design Conference and Exhibi-

tion will take place in San Francisco, California, May 19-22, 1998. The event will feature seminars, exhibition and a 3-D lab where visitors can test-drive hardware and software. Tom Turpin, president and CEO of Will Vinton Studios, will deliver the keynote address on May 20. Additional speakers and course teachers include Tim Cheung (PDI), Dave Thompson (DreamWorks), Frank Delise (Kinetix) and Max Sims (Technolution). For information, visit www.3dshow.com or call (800) 789-2223.

Fischinger Exhibit/Sale In L.A.

"Optical Poetry," a major exhibition of the work of the late abstract animation filmmaker Oskar Fischinger opened last week at the Jack Rutberg Fine Arts gallery at 357 North LaBrea Avenue in Los Angeles, California. The exhibition, which runs through June, features more than 40 original paintings and drawings created by Fischinger. Other than a mutoscope created by Fischinger which is only on display, all of the artwork in the show is for sale. Prices range between \$6,000-\$80,000 per piece. A video cassette—*The Films of Oskar Fischinger Volume I*—has also been produced by Jack Rutberg Fine Arts and is available for U.S. \$40.00. For information, contact JFineArts@aol.com.

Cardiff's Got Vital-ity. The renamed Cardiff Animation Festival, now known as Vital!, is gearing up for its biennial event, June 23 to 28 in Cardiff, Wales, with a huge offering of programs. The festival has a new focus on commercial issues, career training and the interaction of the creative and business aspects of animation. The new festival direc-

tor Jane Williams said, "Our aim is to celebrate the industry in a fun but informative way, emphasizing the importance of Vital! as the bridge between the U.S. and European industries." Following are some of the confirmed festival features to date. Retrospectives will profile Magnus Carlsson (*Robin*), Joanna Quinn (*Famous Fred*), Mae Questel (the voice of Betty Boop), George Pal (stop-motion commercials), Georges Lacroix (*Fantôme*), and legendary British animators Oliver Postgate and Peter Firmin (*The Clangers*, *Noggin the Nog*). Exhibitions will include the artwork of the late illustrator Saul Bass, experimental artist/filmmaker Harry Smith and South African puppeteer/animation William Kentridge. Adult film programs will include a show of the *South Park* animated series, and Manga Entertainment's *General Chaos*. Keith Griffiths from Illuminations will present "Is It Animation?," a look at definitions of animation. Pat Gavin from Hibbert-Ralph will present a seminar on low-end production. BBC will organize several children's programs, including a screening of Weston Woods films (*The Snowman*, *Where the Wild Things Are*), and a chance for kids to "meet the Gogs," characters from the popular clay-animated series. Seminars will include a sneak peek at the new Skillset Report, "Training Needs and Employment Trends in the British Animation Industry;" "Careers and Crumpets;" "BBC Script Surgeries;" and Cartoon UK will present "A Portfolio for Success." The festival's second "industry Expo" will also offer a forum for networking and business interaction. For complete program listings and registration information, visit the Vital! web

site at <http://www.vital-animation.org>.

Last Month In Animation

The following is a list of events which took place since the last issue of *Animation World Magazine* was published. These listings are published weekly in the *Animation Flash*, a free newsletter which is distributed by e-mail. Subscribe now!

- Now through June 17. London, England. The Museum of the Moving Image (MOMI) is featuring an exhibit of artwork from the animated series, *The Simpsons*. Call (44) 0171 401 2636.
- Thursday, March 26-Sunday, April 5. Newport Beach, California, U.S.A. The Newport Beach International Film Festival included screenings of the "Absolut Panushka" collection of animated short films, and the festival's competition program showcased animated films including *The Broken Jaw* by

Chris Shepherd and *Simara* by Christian Schindler.

- Friday, March 27-Sunday, March 29. Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. Rhode Island School of Design hosted an intensive weekend workshop, "Animation Basics for the Web" taught by Cynthia Beth Rubin.
- Saturday, March 28. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Vancouver Film School hosted a public open house at the Multimedia/3D Animation Campus, 420 Homer Street, Vancouver. Activities included hands-on demonstrations, animation and film screenings, and guest speakers Chris Bartleman, owner of Studio B Productions, Barry Ward, president of Bardel Animation as well as representatives of Electronic Arts and Mainframe Entertainment.
- Thursday, April 2. Glendale, California. Legendary animator Chuck Jones appeared at the Warner Bros. Studio Store in the Glendale Galleria mall, to sign animation art purchased at the gallery.



Un Jour. by Marie Paccou. © 2001

- Friday, April 3-Wednesday, April 8. Stuttgart, Germany. The 9th International Festival of Animated Film, reviewed in this issue. AWN's Ron Diamond was present to speak on a panel about Internet animation.

- Friday, April 3-

Wednesday, April 8. Cannes, France. The 35th MIP TV market (reviewed in this issue), showcased nearly 700 animated TV programs from more than 981 exhibitors.

- Friday, April 17. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences presented a screening of the Academy Award nominated animated short films: *Geri's Game* (winner), *Famous Fred*, *La Vielle Dame et les Pigeons*, *The Mermaid* and *Redux Riding Hood*.
- Tuesday, April 21-Sunday, April 26. Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The first Sprockets Toronto International Film Festival for Children took place. Animated works in the program include the 1940s "Animaland" cartoons by David Hand, *Carmen Habanera* by Polish animator Aleksandra Korejwo and *Smoke* by Cal Arts graduate Bobby Podesta.
- Wednesday, April 22-Friday, April 24. Eugene, Oregon, U.S.A. The first annual Motion Graphics, Animation and Arts Festival took place at Cafe Paradiso.
- Thursday, April 23. Burbank, California, U.S.A. Women In Animation Los Angeles presented "Sink or Swim?: The Current State of Independent Animation Studios," a panel discussion featuring Karen Dufilho (Pixar), Bruce Johnson (Porchlight), Corey Powell (Hyperion), David Pritchard (Film Roman), Sue Shakespeare (Creative Capers) and Terry Thoren (Klasky Csupo).

There was a screening of Pixar's Oscar-winning short, *Geri's Game*, and a Historical Committee tribute to Marija Dail.

- Friday, April 24 and Saturday, April 25. North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Capilano College held the 1998 graduate show for its Commercial Animation Program students.
- Friday, April 24 and Saturday, April 25. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. The Film Department of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) presented two programs of animation: "A Tribute to Louise Beaudet and the Cinematheque Quebecoise" and "A Celebration of Stop-Motion Animation" with guest animator Henry Selick.
- Friday, April 24. Tempe, Arizona, U.S.A. The Arizona State University Art Museum presented its second annual Short Film and Video Festival.

- Wednesday, April 22-Sunday, April 26. Oslo, Norway. The fifth International Oslo Animation Festival featured Nordic and Baltic films in competition and international programs, including award-winners from international festivals and special programs presenting the jury members and their films.
- Monday, April 27. San Francisco, California, U.S.A. The Ideas in Animation series continued at Minna Street Gallery: Nik Phelps and the Sprocket Ensemble performed live music to two clay animated films by cartoonist Nina Paley.

Awards

British Academy Awards. The British Academy of Film and Television Arts held its 50th British Academy Film Awards in London on Sunday, April 19. The winner for Best Short Animated Film is Aardman's *Stage Fright*, by Helen Nabarro,

Michael Rose and Steve Box. In the category, Best Achievement in Special Visual Effects, the winner is *The Fifth Element*.

Stuttgart. Winners are included in the festival review in this issue.

AEAF. The Australian Effects and Animation Festival (AEAF) Awards were held at the Sydney Convention Centre on Wednesday, March 18, 1998. Sydney-based design and post house Garner MacLennan Design won in the "Titles, Idents and Stings" category for their work on the *Joey* feature titles. The feature film award went to *The Lost World*, with effects by Industrial Light and Magic (ILM). Tim Cheung's *Gabola the Great* won in the short film category. Winners of the other categories were:

- Student: *Channel Hopping* by Fiona Burnell (U.K.).
- Commercials: *PPP: X-Ray* by Smoke and Mirrors (U.K.).
- Simulation: *Opel - Astra Ride* by Electric Image (U.K.).
- Education: *Walking the Dinosaurs* by Framestore (U.K.).
- Music Video: *Underwater Love: Smoke City* by Red Post Production (U.K.).

Animation Takes On Tampere.

The 28th Tampere International Short Film Festival, which took place March 4-8, 1998 in Finland, awarded the Grand Prize to Marie Paccou's animated film, *Un Jour*. In addition, the award for Best Animated Film went to Czech animator Michaela Pavlatova's new film, *For Ever and Ever*.



British Academy Award winner, *Stage Fright*. © Aardman.

In Passing... A Tribute to Pierre Ayma (1941-1998)

by Annick Teninge

Pierre Ayma passed away quite suddenly last month. We wanted to pay a tribute to this personality of the French Animation industry, with remembrances from Pierre's friends and former students. In 1975, Pierre Ayma founded the Animation Department of the CFT Gobelins school, the main animation school in France. For more than 20 years, Pierre expressed his passion for animated films through his teaching and with his involvement in many other animation related projects. His commitments had a permanent focus point: to give to young people the means to express and develop their talent. I worked with him for a few years at Annecy International Animation Festival, where he was involved in the International Film Project Competition. I was always struck by the quality of his commitment. Despite the difficulties, despite his outspokenness, Pierre was always there.

The following testimonies strongly illustrate his passion and generosity and pay him back well.

Annick Teninge
General Manager
Animation World Network

Pierre, his first name was that of the founders.

And he was one of them, he who, after so many years put together in Europe, stone by stone, image by image, animator after animator, the edifice of this art of

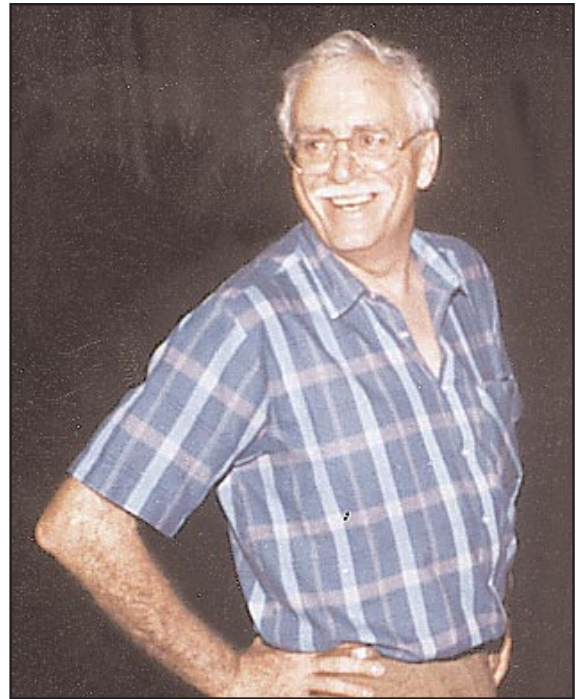
animation which has become, thanks to him, a profession, a passion and an industry for those who live in France on what they learned from him and thanks to him. I will keep the essence of what Pierre left: a force. The force with which he built his teaching. The force he gave to those who fight today so that animation may live. The force which, after he is gone, will be set into motion within us as we continue his work.

Will we live up to it?

Jacques Peyrache
Chairman
XD Productions

We all owe something to him. Upon the French professionals request, in 1975, Pierre Ayma founded the Animation Department of the CFT Gobelins school. This marks the beginning of a long venture which is still alive and well.

**Pierre became a personality that could not be ignored in the animation world and this certainly contributed towards the radiance of the school. -
CFT Gobelins School**



Pierre Ayma. Courtesy of Alain Seraphine

Pierre succeeded in creating a curriculum acknowledged by professionals worldwide. All of the classes who spread out into small and large production studios alike display the vitality of his work. Pierre became a personality that could not be ignored in the animation world and this certainly contributed towards the radiance of the school. His main concern was that each student found his place in the industry. He leaves us a past full of a life-long passion in the service of education. Everyone in the animation industry benefits from it and it will remain an example for all the people who met him and for the school's team who ensures its continuity.

The team of the Animation Department - CFT Gobelins School

In 1975, Pierre Ayma launched the first courses in animation cinema within the framework of the Center for Technological Education of C.C.I., on Boulevard St. Marcel in Paris. That's where I met him, when I came to present my portfolio in hopes of being accepted as a student. I was scared to death to find myself once again in a moderately engaging scholastic milieu, but Pierre was quick to reassure me, and took me to the spaces designated for the future students.

Aside from the animation desks that were flagrantly new, the rest of the material consisted of "pegbars" borrowed from the Center's printing department, an animation stand tinkered together from metal corners, a camera borrowed from a colleague, and a 16mm projector of Biblical age. That is how I began my education, together with seven other true believers, under the benevolent encouragement of Pierre. Over two years, the respect that we had for him transformed into camaraderie and friendship. Thanks to his enthusiasm, he knew how to create not only a motivated team but also a group of good friends. During that time Pierre upgraded the equipment. The first editing table appeared soon, then a genuine animation stand, etc... You should see what kind of equipment the students get today! Also Pierre involved professional animators in our education, and arranged regular visits between them and us.

Pierre Ayma, not content to

manage his animation department, never feared to give aid and counsel to his flock. More than one student, me among them, took little jobs to survive, in the studios or elsewhere, thanks to him. He pushed me to take my first job at Hanna-Barbera Cartoons in the United States, and when I returned, convinced the director of a Parisian studio to hire me.

His pugnacity, his rigor in his work and what he expects of others, was seasoned with a dose of cold humor, or completely off the

was completed, the good relationship between us continued through friendly visits to the CFT where we would exchange news, and in the better moments, when he had the time, it would border on sophisticated insults which would leave us bent double with laughter and tears running from our eyes on both sides of his desk. Under his cane have passed many neophytes. He actively participated in all the important moments in French animation, and lost his health doing so.

Animation has lost one of its most solid pillars, and we have lost a pal.

Yves-Charles Fercoq

Animator

Student from the first year at CFT Gobelins (1975)



Drawing by Pierre Lambert April 1998

Pierre Ayma, not content to manage his animation department, never feared to give aid and counsel to his flock. -Yves-Charles Fercoq

wall behavior when the opportunity presented itself... or sometimes even if it didn't! After our education

I had the pleasure to see Pierre again a few days before he passed away. It was during a writing seminar organized by Cartoon (European Animated Film Association) in Vienna.

At midnight, we both wandered in the small streets, recalling memories from 20 years ago when I was a student in animation at the CFT Gobelins, which he was then running.

In 20 years, thanks to Pierre Ayma, this school has gained an international reputation, training animators who have found their place in prestigious studios such as Disney, Universal, Pixar and Dream-Works. I am proud I have taught to some of these students. I owe this to Pierre Ayma who succeeded in putting talents together and pulling the French professionals to an inter-

national level.

Thank you Pierre.

Stéphane Bernasconi

Producer/Director

Ellipse Studio

End of the 1980s

The Village Titan Ecoles partnership contacts René Borg, one of the directors who made a mark in French animation films, for training aimed at young interns within the framework of an experience led by the Village Titan Ecoles, which is working on creating the school of Fine Arts of La Réunion.

René Borg facilitates my meeting with Pierre Ayma, founder of the Film Animation Department at CFT Gobelins, school of the Paris Chamber of Commerce. So, I meet with this dynamic personality from the world of film animation, who is respected in professional as well as institutional circles. A friendship is born; agreements are signed between Village Titan and CFT Gobelins to facilitate training for the youth of La Réunion, a French island in the Indian Ocean, near Madagascar.

Pierre Ayma loved to say, "We don't have the right to train for 'unemployment or exile,' hence the need to encourage the development and creation of an industrial environment in the field of film animation in Réunion."

November '93

This mad idea is launched in partnership with the Village Titan. Pierre brings a certain number of personalities to Réunion: representatives from the SPFA, CNC, Media Cartoon, Mr. Robert Heintz from AFDAS, and a number of produc-

ers. Debates take place with representatives from local groups. Thanks to Pierre's charisma, network of talent and trust which he has instilled, producers join us, like Eva Production and Rooster. As of June '94, training is begun for 70 people.

At midnight, we both wandered in the small streets, recalling memories from 20 years ago when I was a student in animation at the CFT Gobelins... - Stéphane Bernasconi

June '95

The young trainees are working and the new animation production studio called Pipangai sees the light of day. Aware of the fragility of this new industrial enterprise, Pierre works night and day over long distances to bring business back from Asia to France; making bringing business back to France a reality, and above all to make this business last. He facilitates the advancement of traditional animation Pipangai know-how into knowledge about the new digital resources of today, because he believes with every fiber in him that the development of filmmaking has to be not only the training of people, but also the continual advancement and learning of the latest techniques.

January '96

Training in the new technologies begins.

December '96

Pipangai delivers 60 x 26 minute episodes to PMMP and Gaumont with a staff of about 150.

Always thanks to Pierre, the transfer of technology was able to

happen from CFT Gobelins to Village Titan.

Today, the "Indian Ocean Institute of the Image" has been created. This institute, modeled after CFT Gobelins, is training, of course, in the field of film animation, but also in the fields of television, graphic design and multimedia occupations.

In recent days we were still working with him on the placement of our young interns, who after two years of training would present their work to a professional European jury for approval of their talents and do a rigorous apprenticeship with French and European studios.

Shortening distances and working in the industry at the world level, the introduction of new technologies have proven him correct today. Along with Village Titan at the Cartoon Forum in Arles during a press conference, Pierre was able to show and demonstrate that teleteaching, or long distance teaching, would be a guarantee to facilitate the development of quality teaching and financial backing through and thanks to the institution of a network of different teaching establishments for animated cartoons in Europe.

This was, of course, the great project which motivated him of late, and on the eve of his death, by telephone with us on Réunion, he let his feelings be known about this project of a network of European schools: "This is a project I've been nurturing for 30 years [and] neither distance nor economic reasons, much less administrative constraints, will keep me from finally getting it going."

Thanks to the friendship he shared with us and to his interest in the experience led by Village Titan,

Pierre made our island into a meeting place. He was at our side to bring to life "The Crossroads of the Indian Ocean Image" which in '95 gathered over one hundred professionals, producers and broadcasters.

The employees of Pipangai, Village Titan, the Institute de l'Image, [and] the school of Fine Arts of La Réunion can only bow their heads in homage to this uncommon man, and thank him for allowing us to see beyond our volcano, for helping us live the adventure of 'toons, and break out of our island isolation.

We can say that with Pierre Ayma we got into film, and that the dream became reality. Pipangai today employs a staff of over 200, and the Institut de l'Image is preparing tomorrow's talents in the field of animation, 3-D animation and multimedia. As part of the schools accredited by the Ministry of French Culture, the school of Fine Arts is becoming the school which trains the auteurs, the directors of animated cartoons and multimedia.

Apart from his passion for animated cartoons, his great professionalism, his conviction in the worth of training people, the spirit of integrity which motivated him, what set Pierre Ayma apart is a great generosity and great sensitivity which emanated from him and which he bore lightly. His friends, his colleagues, his former students, the professional world, we all have the duty to continue, each at his level, the work of a man who knew how to put his energy, his passion and his talents to the service of all. We certainly have more to learn, to exchange, [and] to share so that this profession grows and spreads in France and in Europe.

Such was the fight of Pierre Ayma.

Alain Séraphine
Director
Fine Arts School of La Réunion
Island

Our friend Pierre has left us. Like many in our profession, I owe him an enormous debt. He knew how to communicate his passion for animation to us, to guide us, warn us, encourage us to start up crazy, but always deeply human, projects. We must all continue his work. I had run into him just before his passing. Full of fire, he had a new project he wanted to bring us into and I had taken this picture as proof of his determination and good humor (Tuesday, March 17, 1998, at 10:00 a.m.).

See you soon, Pierre!!

Jean-Louis Rizet
Ramses. Pev. TouTenKartoon

Pierre Ayma: A Devil of a Man

In 1983, when I finished my first professional short film, *Story of a Clown*, my producer, Julien Pappé, advised me to go meet Pierre Ayma at the Department of Animation at the CFT Gobelins, because he thought that I would be able to teach at the school. Hardly convinced of the idea, seeing my young age, I nevertheless risked knocking on the door of this gentleman, a proven authority in the world of animation. From the first second of our conversation, I was charmed by the smile, the malice, the mustache, and the good-nature



Photo courtesy © Jean-Louis Rizet

of Pierre, who had, among other things, that incomparable gift of immediately putting his companion at ease. After testing out my knowledge, he hired me right there and then, and that was the point of departure for a long friendship that never failed over fifteen years.

We must all continue his work.
- Jean-Louis Rizet

Conscious of my handicap as a beginner in the medium, Pierre Ayma quickly became my chosen counselor, and even if some illustrious people like Norman McLaren, Rene Laloux and Julien Pappé had the goodness to lean over my cradle, it is Pierre Ayma to whom I owe being able to practice my métier as animator in France and elsewhere in the world. During all those years, at any hour of the day or night, Pierre encouraged me, counseled me, consoled me, reassured me, and told me off with a bashful charm of a father that dares not speak all the love that he bears for his children.

His infectious enthusiasm, his innate sense of appreciation for others, his generosity, his honesty, his visceral rejection of corruption, his



Drawing by the students from his last class. Courtesy of Jean-Louis Bompont.

cool humor, his professionalism and his explosive anger have been for me a model of life and comportment with my peers. By himself, and often against opposition, he raised French Animation to its just value, and I know of no one in our profession who is not indebted to him for something.

Forcibly refusing all honors and thank-yous: "If you mention me in your credits, I'll never speak to you again!..." (sic), Pierre Ayma's only happiness was to see animators and filmmakers succeed with their projects. For, not content just to head a school with all the vigor that one knows, Pierre would help every animator in difficulty, freely giving his energy to each person that asked for his help.

Pierre was Voltairian: he could have taken part in the Callas affair, or that of the Chevalier de la Barre.

Now that he has left us, who will protect us from fate? No one can tell me now that no man is irreplaceable...

My friend Philippe Hervieux and I kept close to Pierre Ayma in the last days of his life. He asked us to complete the training of thirty

apprentices before they participated in the Mediapole adventure in the town of Arles, with the cooperation of the new Arles Animation Studio. A certain number of problems had obliged Pierre to draw back from the project that he had tried to finish for two years. He had put a great deal of effort into it, and we devoted all of our energy to keeping it going as long as we could, this last promotion of artists that he had rigorously pursued. When he announced to the apprentices that he was leaving for reasons beyond his control, his farewells were drowned out by spontaneous applause, and he was very moved. In a short time, these young people had understood the dimensions of this man who never compromised, and who never hesitated to launch their program, even if it meant using his own personal money to advance the costs. But that wasn't the best part. Even though he had to step aside from the project, Pierre continued to telephone us to find out how our apprentices were doing, calling each of them by name. He didn't have anything to worry about. His last project continues to do him honor.

A few days before his death, Pierre invited us to dinner in a restaurant situated not far from his village of Puget on the Durance. Mireille, his wife, Philippe Hervieux and I never doubted that he had gotten us there to deliver one of his

last messages of friendship. Over the course of this dinner, the laughter and wine flowed, Pierre threw himself into one of his favorite sports, which consisted of merrily pulling my leg to the greatest delight of the other guests. Then, the tone got serious and Pierre said to us, speaking of the apprentices, "Take good care of them. I've seen in their sparkling eyes how much they love this profession..." Finally, during dessert, he told us the dream of his life: to create a space that would be like the Villa Medici for Animation, where all filmmakers could come and shoot their films without any constraints, financial or aesthetic. Then he took us home to his house, we drank a glass for friendship, and then with a certain pride he showed us his new office with a superb bay window that opens on this Provence which he loved so much. And there, once again, he spoke of unheard projects with an enthusiasm and a force that wouldn't let us suppose that this would be the last time he would flash his boyish smile at us. Of course, we all knew that recently Pierre had serious medical problems, but his courage and his discretion about his private life didn't have the time to tell us that his health wouldn't permit him to animate anymore, and that he was about to make us orphans, that devil of a man...

Jean-Louis Bompont
Director and Musician

Translated from French by William Moritz and Nancy Gilmour.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

En Hommage à Pierre Ayma (1941-1998)

par Annick Teninge

Pierre Ayma nous a soudainement quittés le mois dernier. Nous avons voulu rendre hommage à cette personnalité du cinéma d'animation français, à travers quelques témoignages d'amis et anciens élèves. Pierre Ayma créa en 1975 le département Cinéma d'Animation du Centre de Formation Technologique des Gobelins-CCI de Paris (principale école française de formation aux métiers de l'animation). Pendant plus de vingt ans, Pierre a communiqué sa passion du cinéma d'animation, à travers l'enseignement et nombre de projets, avec une constante: donner aux jeunes les moyens d'exprimer et développer leur talent. Je l'ai cotoyé pendant plusieurs années au Festival d'Annecy, où il était associé au Concours International de Projets. J'ai toujours été frappée par la qualité de son engagement; malgré les difficultés, malgré ses coups de gueule, Pierre était toujours là.

Les témoignages ci-après illustrent avec force sa passion et sa générosité, et le lui rendent bien...

Annick Teninge
Animation World Network

Pierre avait le prénom des fondateurs.

Et il en fut un, lui qui, depuis tant d'années, a bâti en Europe, pierre à pierre, image par image, animateur après animateur, l'édifice de cet art de l'animation qui est devenu, grâce à lui, un métier, une passion et une industrie pour ceux qui aujourd'hui en France, vivent

de ce qu'ils ont appris avec lui, et grâce à lui. De ce qui Pierre a laissé je retiendrai l'essentiel : une force. Force avec laquelle il a construit son enseignement. Force qu'il a donnée à ceux qui se battent aujourd'hui pour que l'animation vive. Force qui après son départ agira en nous et continuera son oeuvre.

Serons-nous à la hauteur?

Jacques Peyrache
Chairman
XD Productions

Nous lui devons tous quelque chose.

C'est à la demande des professionnels français que Pierre Ayma créa en 1975 le département cinéma d'animation au sein du CFT Gobelins (Paris). Ce fut le début d'une longue aventure qui est toujours bien vivante.

En devenant une personnalité incontournable de l'animation, Pierre contribua fortement au rayonnement de l'école.
- CFT Gobelins

Pierre réussit à créer au fil des ans un enseignement reconnu par les spécialistes du monde entier ; les différentes promotions qui ont essaimé dans les petits et grands studios témoignent de la vitalité de

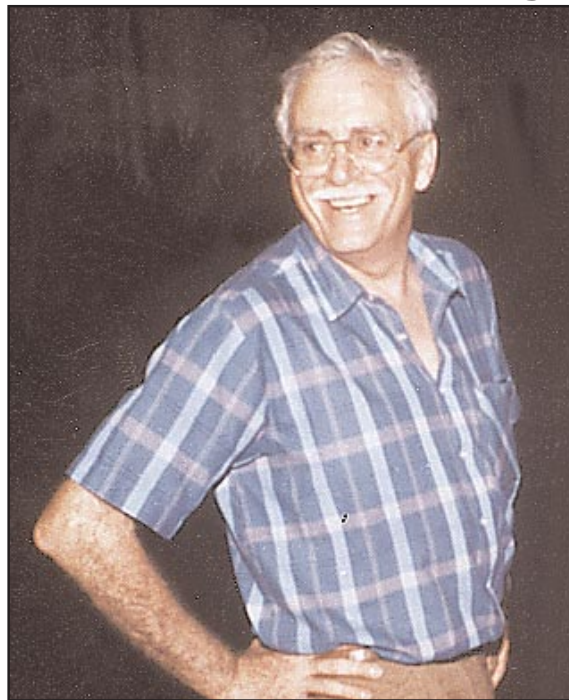


photo et © Alain Seraphine

son oeuvre.

En devenant une personnalité incontournable de l'animation, Pierre contribua fortement au rayonnement de l'école car sa préoccupation première a toujours été que chaque étudiant puisse trouver sa place dans ce métier. Il nous laisse en héritage ce passé riche d'une passion de toute une vie au service de la formation, dont l'ensemble de la profession bénéficie; cela restera un modèle pour l'équipe qui assure la continuité et tous ceux qui l'ont connu.

L'équipe du département Cinéma d'Animation
CFT Gobelins

En 1975, Pierre Ayma lança le premier cycle de formation au

cinéma d'animation dans le cadre du Centre de Formation Technologique des Gobelins, boulevard Saint Marcel à Paris. C'est là que je fis sa connaissance en venant présenter mon dossier pour poser ma candidature. J'étais mort de trouille de me retrouver dans un cadre scolaire moyennement engageant, mais Pierre eut tôt fait de me rassurer et me fit visiter les locaux dévolus aux futurs élèves.

Hormis les tables d'animation flambant neuves, le reste du matériel consistait en "pegbars" empruntées au département imprimerie du centre, un banc-titre fabriqué de cornières métalliques, une caméra prêtée par un collègue et un projecteur 16mm d'âge canonique. Et c'est ainsi qu'a commencé ma formation, avec sept coréligionnaires, sous les encouragements bienveillants de Pierre. Pendant deux ans le respect que nous avions à son égard se transforma en amitié et en camaraderie. Grâce à son enthousiasme, il avait su créer, outre une équipe motivée, un bon groupe de copains. Durant ce temps, Pierre améliorait la qualité du matériel. Une première table de montage fit bientôt son apparition, puis un véritable banc-titre, etc... Il faut voir maintenant les équipements proposés aux élèves! De même Pierre intéressait les professionnels du cinéma d'animation à cette formation. Il organisa de régulières rencontres entre ceux-ci et nous, pour notre plus grand profit.

Non content de gérer son département d'animation, Pierre ne craignait pas de donner aides et

conseils à ses ouailles. Grâce à lui, plus d'un, dont moi, trouvèrent pour survivre de petits jobs dans des studios ou ailleurs. Il me poussa à faire mes premières armes à Hanna & Barbera aux Etats-Unis et conquit à mon retour, le directeur d'un studio parisien à m'engager.

Sa pugnacité, la rigueur dans son travail et dans celui des autres étaient assaisonnées d'une



Dessin de Pierre Lambert. Avril 1998

dose d'humour à froid ou complètement loufoque dès que l'occasion se présentait ; ou sans occa-

Non content de gérer son département d'animation, Pierre ne craignait pas de donner aides et conseils à ses ouailles. - Yves Charles Fercoq

sion d'ailleurs. Après que le cycle de formation fut achevé, les bonnes relations continuèrent par des visites amicales au C.F.T. où nous échangeons des nouvelles et dans

les meilleurs moments, quand il en avait le temps, des bordées d'insultes sophistiquées qui nous laissaient pliés de rire et les larmes aux yeux de chaque côté de son bureau. Les larmes aujourd'hui ont une autre cause et c'est de sa faute. Sous sa férule sont passés de multiples néophytes. Il a participé activement à tous les moments importants du cinéma d'animation en France, il y a laissé sa santé.

Le cinéma d'animation a perdu un de ses plus solides piliers et nous avons perdu un pote.

Yves Charles Fercoq
Animateur
Elève de la première Promotion du CFT Gobelins (1975)

J'ai eu le plaisir de revoir Pierre Ayma quelques jours avant sa disparition au cours d'un stage d'écriture à Vienne, organisé par Cartoon (Association Européenne du Film d'Animation).

A minuit, nous nous sommes promenés tous les deux dans les ruelles, nous remémorant des souvenirs vieux de vingt ans, lorsque j'étais étudiant en dessin animé au CFT Gobelins qu'il dirigeait alors.

En vingt ans, grâce à Pierre Ayma, cette école a acquis une réputation internationale, formant des animateurs qui ont trouvé leur place au sein de studios aussi prestigieux que Disney, Universal, Pixar ou DreamWorks. Je suis fier aujourd'hui d'avoir été pour certains d'entre eux leur professeur, et cela je le dois à Pierre Ayma, qui a su réunir les talents et hisser le milieu professionnel français à l'échelon international.

Merci Pierre.

Fin des années 80

L'association Village Titan Ecoles, fait appel à René Borg, un des réalisateurs qui a marqué le cinéma d'animation français, pour une formation destinée à des jeunes stagiaires dans le cadre d'une expérience menée par le Village Titan qui travaillait en même temps à la naissance de l'Ecole des Beaux Arts de l'Île de la Réunion.

René Borg favorise ma rencontre avec Pierre Ayma, le fondateur du département Cinéma d'Animation au CFT Gobelins, école de la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Paris. Je fais donc connaissance avec cette personnalité forte du monde du cinéma d'animation, respectée tant du milieu professionnel qu'institutionnel. Une amitié va naître; des conventions vont être signées entre le Village Titan et le CFT Gobelins pour favoriser la formation des jeunes réunionnais.

Pierre Ayma aimait dire que "l'on a pas le droit de former pour le chômage ou l'exil", d'où la nécessité de favoriser le développement et la création d'un environnement industriel dans le domaine du cinéma d'animation à la Réunion.

Novembre 93

L'idée folle est lancée, en partenariat avec le Village Titan. Pierre emmène à la Réunion un certain nombre de personnalités: des représentants du SPFA, du CNC, de Média Cartoon, Monsieur Robert Heintz de l'AFDAS, un certain nombre de producteurs. Des débats vont avoir lieu avec les représentants des collectivités locales. Grâce à son charisme, et au réseau de compétences et de confiance qu'il

a su tisser autour de lui, des producteurs vont venir à nos côtés, en l'occurrence EVA Production et Rooster; dès juin 94 la formation est lancée pour 70 personnes.

Juin 95

Les jeunes formés sont en production, une industrie du cinéma d'animation dénommée "Pipangaï" voit ainsi le jour. Conscient de la fragilité de cette expérience industrielle nouvelle, Pierre va travailler sans relâche à distance pour que le rêve de rapatrier de l'activité de l'Asie vers la France devienne réalité, et surtout que l'activité se pérennise. Il va favoriser la reconversion du savoir faire traditionnel de Pipangaï en "Nouvelles Technologies"; Pierre croyait dur comme fer que le développement de l'activité cinématographique passait d'abord par la formation des hommes, mais aussi par une veille technologique permanente.

Pierre avait le prénom des fondateurs. Et il en fut un, lui qui, depuis tant d'années a bâti en Europe, pierre à pierre, image par image, animateur après animateur, l'édifice de cet art de l'animation
- Jacques Perache

Janvier 96

La formation en nouvelles technologies est lancée.

Décembre 96

Pipangaï aura livré 60 x 26 minutes à PMMP et Gaumont avec un effectif de 150 personnes environ.

Toujours grâce à lui, le transfert de technologies a pu avoir lieu du CFT Gobelins vers le Village Titan.

Est créé aujourd'hui: "l'Institut de l'Image de l'Océan Indien". Cet institut, à l'instar du CFT Gobelins, travaille bien entendu dans le domaine des métiers du cinéma d'animation, mais également dans le domaine des métiers de la télévision, des industries graphiques et du multimédia.

Ces jours derniers, nous travaillons encore avec lui à la mise en place de la formation de nos jeunes stagiaires, qui après deux années de formation auraient à présenter leurs travaux à un jury professionnel européen, pour la validation de leurs compétences, à faire des stages en entreprise dans des studios français et européens, avec un esprit de "compagnonnage" pour parfaire leur expérience professionnelle.

Raccourcir les distances, travailler pour cette profession à l'échelle de la planète, les technologies nouvelles lui donnent aujourd'hui raison. Avec le Village Titan, lors du Forum Cartoon 1997 à Arles, dans le cadre d'une conférence de presse, Pierre a pu montrer et démontrer que le téléenseignement allait être une garantie pour favoriser le développement de la qualité de l'enseignement, et sa faisabilité financière, par une économie d'échelle obtenue grâce à la mise en réseau des différents établissements d'enseignement du dessin animé en Europe.

C'était bien sûr le grand projet qui l'animait ces derniers temps, et à la veille de sa mort encore, en communication téléphonique avec nous à la Réunion, il a laissé entendre, concernant ce projet de réseau d'écoles européennes: "c'est un projet que je nourris depuis 30 ans, ce n'est ni la distance, ni les raisons économiques, et encore moins des contraintes administratives qui

m'empêcheront de le mettre enfin en place".

Grâce à l'amitié qu'il partageait avec nous et à l'intérêt qu'il portait pour l'expérience menée par le Village Titan, Pierre a fait de notre île un lieu de convergence. Il a été à nos côtés pour faire naître "le Carrefour de l'Image de l'Océan Indien" qui a réuni, en 95, plus d'une centaine de professionnels, producteurs et diffuseurs.

Les employés de Pipangaï, du Village Titan, de l'Institut de l'Image, de l'Ecole des Beaux Arts de la Réunion, ne peuvent que s'incliner et rendre hommage à cet homme hors du commun, le remerciant d'avoir pu nous permettre de voir plus loin que notre volcan, nous faire vivre l'aventure des "toons", et nous aider à rompre notre isolement insulaire.

On peut dire qu'avec Pierre Ayma on est rentré dans le film, et que le rêve est devenu réalité. Pipangaï affiche aujourd'hui près de 200 employés et l'Institut de l'Image prépare les compétences de demain en animation, 3D, et en multimédia. L'école des Beaux Arts, faisant partie des écoles agréées par le Ministère de la Culture, devient l'école qui forme des auteurs, des réalisateurs en dessin animé et multimédia. Ce qui caractérisait Pierre Ayma, au delà de sa passion pour le dessin animé, de son grand professionnalisme, de sa conviction dans la formation des hommes, de l'esprit d'intégrité qui l'animait, c'est une grande générosité et une grande sensibilité qui se dégageait de Pierre Ayma et qu'il portait. Ses amis, ses collègues, ses anciens étudiants, le monde professionnel, nous tous avons le devoir de poursuivre l'œuvre, chacun à notre niveau, d'un homme qui a su mettre son énergie, sa passion, ses compétences au service de tous. Nous aurons cer-

tainement à apprendre encore, à échanger, à partager pour que cette profession grandisse et s'épanouisse en France, en Europe.

Tel était le combat de Pierre Ayma.

Alain Séraphine
Directeur
Ecole des Beaux-Arts de l'île de la Réunion

Notre ami Pierre nous a quittés. Comme beaucoup dans notre métier, je lui dois énormément ; il a su nous communiquer sa passion de l'animation, nous guider, nous mettre en garde, nous encourager, déclencher des projets fous mais toujours profondément humains. Nous devons tous continuer son œuvre.

Je l'avais rencontré peu de temps avant sa disparition ; plein de fougue, il avait un nouveau projet auquel il voulait nous associer. J'avais pris la photo suivante témoin de sa détermination et sa bonne humeur. (mardi 17 mars 1998 à 10 heures).

A bientôt Pierre !!

Jean-Louis Rizet
Ramses Pev TouTenKartoon



photo et © Jean-Louis Rizet

Pierre Ayma: ce diable d'homme

En 1983, alors que je terminais mon premier court-métrage professionnel *Histoire d'un Clown*, mon producteur d'alors, Julien Pappé, me conseilla de rencontrer Pierre Ayma au département Cinéma d'Animation du CFT Gobelins, car il pensait que je pourrais enseigner au sein de cette école. Peu convaincu de l'idée, vu mon jeune âge, je me risquais tout de même à frapper à la porte de ce Monsieur, dont l'autorité dans le monde de l'animation n'était déjà plus à prouver. Dès les premières secondes de notre entretien, je fus charmé par le sourire, la malice, les moustaches et la bonhomie de Pierre, qui avait entre autres, ce don inégalable de mettre tout de suite ses interlocuteurs à l'aise. Après m'avoir fait subir un test de connaissances, il m'engagea aussitôt et ce fût là le point de départ d'une longue amitié qui ne devait jamais se démentir durant quinze ans.

Conscient de mon handicap de débutant dans le métier, Pierre Ayma devint bien vite mon conseiller de prédilection et même si des personnes illustres comme Norman Mac Laren, René Laloux et Julien Pappé ont eu la bonté de se pencher sur mon berceau, c'est à Pierre Ayma à qui je dois d'avoir pu exercer mon métier de cinéaste d'animation, en France et de par le monde. Pendant toutes ces années, à n'importe quelle heure du jour ou de la nuit, Pierre m'a encouragé, conseillé, consolé, rassuré et engueulé, avec le charme pudique d'un père qui n'ose pas dire tout l'amour qu'il porte à ses enfants.

Son enthousiasme communicatif, son sens inné de l'appréciation des



Dessin par les élèves de la dernière promotion de Pierre Ayma à Arles. crédit Jean-Louis Bompont.

êtres, sa générosité, son honnêteté, son refus viscéral de la corruption, son humour à froid, son professionnalisme et ses colères explosives ont été pour moi un modèle de vie et de comportement vis à vis de mes pairs. A lui seul, et souvent contre tous, il a élevé le Cinéma d'Animation Français à sa juste valeur et je ne connais personne dans notre profession qui ne lui soit pas redevable de quelque chose.

Refusant avec force les honneurs et les remerciements : "Si vous me citez au générique, je ne vous adresse plus la parole !.." (Sic), le seul bonheur de Pierre Ayma aura été de voir des dessinateurs et des cinéastes qui réussissent leurs projets. Car non content de diriger une école avec le brio que l'on sait,

Pierre aidait tout cinéaste d'animation en difficulté, dépensant sans compter son énergie pour chaque personne venue réclamer son soutien.

A présent qu'il vient de nous quitter, qui va nous protéger de la sorte ? Que l'on ne vienne plus jamais me dire que tout Homme n'est pas irremplaçable...
- Jean-Louis Bompont

Pierre était un Voltairien : Il aurait pu prendre parti dans l'Affaire Callas ou celle du Chevalier de la Barre.

A présent qu'il vient de nous quitter, qui va nous protéger de la sorte ? Que l'on ne vienne plus

jamais me dire que tout Homme n'est pas irremplaçable...

Avec mon camarade Philippe Hervieux, nous avons côtoyé Pierre Ayma dans les derniers jours de sa vie. Il nous avait demandé d'encadrer la formation de trente stagiaires devant participer à l'aventure Médiapôle de la ville d'Arles avec le concours du nouveau studio Arles Animation. Un certain nombre de problèmes ont obligé Pierre à se retirer du projet qu'il tentait de finaliser depuis deux ans. Il en a beaucoup souffert et nous avons mis toute notre ardeur à soutenir, pendant la durée de notre contrat, sa dernière promotion d'artistes qu'il avait rigoureusement sélectionnée. Lorsqu'il a annoncé son départ aux stagiaires

pour des raisons indépendantes de sa volonté, son adieu a été couvert d'applaudissements spontanés et émus de la situation. En peu de temps, ces jeunes gens avaient compris la dimension de cet Homme qui n'a jamais accepté de faire des compromis et qui n'avait pas hésité à lancer cette formation en puisant sans compter dans sa cassette personnelle pour en avancer les frais. Mais là ne réside pas le plus beau. Bien qu'il ait été écarté du projet, Pierre continuait à nous téléphoner afin de savoir comment progressaient nos stagiaires, en les nommant un par un. Il n'avait pas à s'inquiéter. Sa dernière promotion continue encore à lui faire honneur.

Quelques jours avant son décès, Pierre nous avait invités à dîner dans un restaurant situé non loin de son village de Puget sur Durance. Mireille son épouse, Philippe Hervieux et moi étions loin

de nous douter qu'il nous délivrait là un de ses derniers messages d'amitié. Au cours de ce repas, le rire et le vin ont coulé à flots et Pierre s'est livré à un de ses sports favoris, qui consistait à me mettre joyeusement en boîte pour la plus grande joie des autres convives. Puis, le ton redevenait sérieux et Pierre nous disait, en parlant de nos stagiaires : "Occupez vous bien d'eux. J'ai vu dans leurs yeux qui brillaient, leur passion pour ce métier..." Enfin, lors du dessert, il nous a confié le rêve de sa vie : créer un endroit qui serait la Villa Médicis de l'Animation, où tout cinéaste pourrait venir tourner son film sans contraintes financières et esthétiques. Puis il nous a emmenés chez lui, boire le verre de l'amitié et ce n'est pas sans fierté qu'il nous a montré son nouveau bureau dont la superbe baie vitrée donne sur cette Provence qu'il aimait tant. Et là, il nous a encore parlé de projets inouïs avec un en-

thousiasme et une force qui ne laissaient pas présager que ce serait la dernière fois qu'il nous éclairerait de son sourire juvénile. Bien sûr, nous savions tous que Pierre avait eu de sérieux problèmes médicaux ces temps derniers. Mais son courage et sa discrétion sur sa vie privée n'ont pas eu le temps de nous dire que sa santé ne voulait plus faire de nous des orphelins, ce diable d'Homme...

Jean-Louis Bompont
Réalisateur et Musicien

Note: Les lecteurs peuvent contacter les collaborateurs d'Animation World Magazine en envoyant un e-mail à editor@awn.com.



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DESERT ISLAND SERIES

compiled by Wendy Jackson

This month, we asked a few people involved in visual effects and experimental animation what animated films they would want to have with them if they were stranded on a desert island.

On the visual effects side, Phil Tippett is the founder of Tippett Studios, the San Francisco-based effects studio which created the spectacular giant insect effects for Paul Verhoeven's *Starship Troopers*, a 1997 Oscar nominee for Best Visual Effects. On the experimental animation side, Richard Reeves is a Canadian experimental animator whose recent direct (drawn-on-film) animated short, *Linear Dreams*, has been receiving rave reviews as it embarks on its international festival circuit. The film can be seen next at the Annecy festival in May. Finally, somewhere between visual effects and animation, Daina Krumins is a New Jersey-based law firm administrator by day, and experimental filmmaker by night. Her surreal films such as *Babobilicons* combine live-action and animation with tried and true visual effects technologies such as chroma-key and optical printing. Her next film, *Summer Light* should be completed some time this year.

Phil Tippett's Top Ten:

1. *Akira* by Katsuhiro Otomo.
2. *My Neighbor Totoro* by Hayao Miyazaki.
3. *Baron Munchausen* by Karel Zeman.
4. *The Fabulous World of Jules Verne-Invention of Destination* by Karel Zeman.
5. *Nausicaä: Valley of the Wind* by Hayao Miyazaki.
6. *Beauty and the Beast* (Disney).
7. *Pinocchio* (Disney).
8. *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* (animation by Ray Harryhausen).
9. *Jason and the Argonauts* (animation by Ray Harryhausen).
10. *King Kong*, the 1933 version (animation by Willis O'Brien).

Richard Reeves' Favorites:

It was hard to pick only ten films. For example, Norman McLaren has ten films alone that I could watch over and over. The string that binds these films is that they are all non-narrative; stories told on subconscious levels often inspired by musical or visionary experiences, using a wide range of techniques. These films inspire me...and with each viewing I can find something new in them. On a deserted island with only these films? It could be fun to project some onto rocks or water...

1. *Mosaic* by Norman McLaren and Evelyn Lambart.
2. *Particles in Space* by Len Lye.
3. *Permutations* by John Whitney.
4. *Motion Painting* by Oskar Fischinger.
5. *J.S. Bach: Fantasy in G Minor* by Jan Svankmajer.
6. *Begone Dull Care* by Norman McLaren.
7. *The Bead Game* by Ishu Patel.
8. *Lapis* by James Whitney.
9. *Clocks* by Kirsten Winter.
10. *Frühling (Spring)* by Silke Parzich.

Daina Krumins' Treasure Chest:

Some part of my mind, something that started when I was little, maybe a toddler or baby even, has a relationship with certain shapes, textures, sounds and images. These are the perceptions on which my heart opened at that time, and they are the basis for my own films (along with dreams, sense of beauty and meaning, etc.). The films that I like with this part of my mind, that contain at least some animation, are:

1. Pat O'Neill's work, especially *Water and Power*.
2. The films of the Quay Brothers. I wish I could see them again, and the ones I've missed, too.
3. *The Orchestra* - a video piece that was on *Great Performances* on PBS some years ago.
4. The first part of *Fantasia* (Disney), especially the abstract parts and also the sections with the plant shapes, where mushrooms and flowers dance. (I hate the mawkish later sections like the Greek myth section and "Ave Maria." What hooey.)
5. A long time ago I saw an animation by Kathy Rose which was also a live dance performance. She dressed in a costume to match the film, and danced in front of it. Incredible. I think this was in 1983.
6. Oskar Fischinger's *Composition in Blue* and some others of his which I have seen. I wish I could see more of them.
7. Lately, I've enjoyed the fractal animations that various mathematicians have been coming up with. I like the idea of images based on mathematics. I've always liked physics and math. There was a PBS show this past year on the Mandelbrot Set.
8. I also like computer animation that has something to do with organic shapes: the *Taelon Shuttle in Earth: Final Conflict*, the giant "macroviruses" on a *Star Trek: Voyager* a few years ago, even the computerized spiders in the recent *Lost in Space* to which my son dragged me. These images amuse me.

Then, of course, there is the "social" part of my mind (admittedly undeveloped), with which I like such animated films as:

1. The Tom & Jerry short, *Cat Concerto* (Hanna-Barbera).
2. The Elephant/Ostrich/Crocodile ballet part of *Fantasia* (T. Hee, I think. I remember visiting T. and he had me hug a tree to feel its "inner spirit." I wish I hadn't been so self-conscious about it.)
3. Bugs Bunny, Woody Woodpecker, etc.: the sophisticated stuff.
4. Some parts of *Allegro Non Troppo* by Bruno Bozzetto.
5. *Jiminy Cricket in Pinocchio* and the Crows (and in fact all the rest too), of *Dumbo* (Disney).
6. *Zorns Lemma* by Hollis Frampton. It consists of lots of repetitions of the alphabet, with more images substituted for the letters. (Watch the audience squirm and try to figure out why they are watching this).
7. Tony Conrad's *Flicker Films*. Two frames black, two frames of image — enough to give an epileptic a seizure. Disturbing, but interesting.

The Dirty Birdy

THE DIRTY BIRDY'S
ELEMENTARY Croatian VOL. 1

Halb
Kako si?

Dobro
Dobro

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THE LAND
OF MEAT
AND POTATO
DA, PIVO
MOLIM
AND MAKE IT
SNAPPY!

FAXED FROM ZAGREB, CROATIA!

By John Dilworth

Jobs & Education and the Internet

June 1998

Our June issue is focusing on Jobs and Education and features a sub-theme about the Internet. Chris Robinson is investigating the future of independents in Canada and how it relates to university programs. Jerry Beck defines his "Essential Animation Library" and Kellie-Bea Rainey will profile Animation Toolworks' Video Lunch Box, a device that is changing the face of animation education from Cal Arts to elementary schools. And, what better way to learn about the animation business than to follow an actual production day to day? Barry Purves will chronicle his new work-in-progress *Here's a How de do* that he is creating for the U.K.'s Channel 4. This six month installment will follow all of the ups and downs of the production through Barry's personal diary. We will also survey university faculty members, industry executives, recruiters, artists and students about training, skills, the job market and expectations.

Our Internet section will feature three excellent, insightful articles. Michelle Klein-Hass will let us know where to find the coolest animation on the web, while Robert Gonzales will explain the many tools available for creating animated content and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each. We also have a real treat, in that, Kit Laybourne will present, "Under the Radar: Emerging Voices in Digital Animation."

This issue will also feature another first in a series. Master animation educator Glenn Vilppu will share his life drawing lessons with us in the Student Corner. Students: take advantage of this great opportunity! The Library of Congress will be profiled in our Hidden Treasures column and Wendy Jackson will report on Braincamp, an executive think tank that was held in New York City. Film reviews will include two films for which everyone has been waiting: Disney's *Mulan* and Warner Bros.' *Quest for Camelot*. Plus, revered Disney greats, Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston, will discuss Pierre Lambert's book *Pinocchio*, with Charles Solomon.

Animation World Magazine 1998 Calendar

Adult Animation	(July)
Asian Animation	(August)
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Independent Filmmakers	(October)